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The Nation.
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EDITORIAL

TELEVISION DIPLOMACY

How much of the length of the hostages' durance in Teheran was owed to the extensive American television coverage of the event is difficult to calculate. But it seems indisputable that a useful first step in the Iranian Government's regaining control over the students in the embassy was to cut off their television privileges by expelling American correspondents and banning Iranian TV appearances. If the students holding the hostages thought they could convey their case to the American people via television, they chose the wrong medium. The television evening news shows, as Neil Postman writes on page 245, "give nearly no information and even less knowledge."

The overblown stature the students achieved was not, of course, attributable to American television coverage but they battened at least a little on the media's power to create instant celebrities, and certainly gave the State Department fits about "TV diplomacy." Another celebrity created by the television coverage of the crisis was Hodding Carter 3d. On the strength of his screen test as State Department spokesman, Carter signed a contract with the William Morris Agency, which will represent him in "broadcasting and literary endeavors." Said a Morris V.P.: "He's cool and calm. His handling of the Iranian crisis has done so much to stabilize things on sensitive issues." Carter's performance, which called for him to wax diplomatically wroth on Day 28 and conciliatory on Day 64, was masterly. As he once said, "What we are not going to do is play this game with all the cards face up on the deck." If a diplomat is a man sent abroad to lie for his country, a State Department spokesman is one who bluffs on television. Jimmy Carter's press-conference castigation of Senator Kennedy, implying that there had been no change in Administration policy on the international commission, was in his namesake's tradition.

SAVAK & THE C.I.A.
Carl Kaplan and Fred Halliday

LAUDABLE LEAKS
Robert Sherrill

GIVING CITIES THE BUSINESS
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CALIFORNIA VS. TOXIC WASTES
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TV NON-NEWS
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'POWER ON THE LEFT'
Ronald Radosh

VIEW FROM THE KREMLIN

WHY THE RUSSIANS INVADED

JERRY F. HOUGH

Does the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan signal a major shift in power in the Politburo, as many Kremlinologists suggest? Was Leonid Brezhnev overruled by a new hard-line group in the Politburo, which then reversed his policy on détente in order to challenge the United States for military control of Middle East oil? If the answer is yes, this younger group would be likely to dominate the Politburo and Central Committee well into the 1980s. The implications of such a change would be ominous indeed.

Our information on the inner workings of the Politburo is extremely meager, but we should take a hard look at the probabilities before we rush to a judgment that may affect our policy and that of the Soviet Union for the rest of the decade. The idea that Brezhnev was overruled on such a crucial policy question—let alone forcibly transformed into a figurehead—is, in fact, very difficult to square with the one piece of evidence we have. All sources agree that an operation on the scale of the Afghanistan invasion must have been at least a month in the planning—that is, since the plenary session of the Party Central Committee held on November 27, 1979.

We know two facts about that session of the Central Committee. First, Brezhnev felt sufficiently in control to criticize a number of ministers by name in the course of a harsh denunciation of economic failures. Second, one more voting member was added to the Politburo: the 74-year-old Nikolai Tikhonov, a protégé of Brezhnev for more than thirty years. It seems most improbable that a leader capable of

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LETTERS.

WRONG VICTIM

New York City

Frank Donner's "Conspiracies Unlimited" [*The Nation*, Dec. 22, 1979] was right on target, which is more than I can say for the accused assassin of President Kennedy. Like Mr. Donner, I believe that the *lumpen* Lee Harvey Oswald did it alone—but previously suppressed and overlooked data have led me to the conclusion that he shot J.F.K. by mistake.

We must not be deceived or bemused by the stereotype that only Presidents can be the target of an assassin or that, as Mr. Donner noted, Presidents can be the victims only of a conspiracy. Leo Tolstoy wrote that accidents play at least as big a part in human affairs as, say, planning, contriving and willing. And misfiring is what I believe occurred in Dallas more than sixteen years ago.

Oswald, though eager to be remembered "for 10,000 years," inexplicably denied shooting the President, a crime that would have indeed made him memorable. Marina Oswald testified that her husband was the gunman, but that he must have had someone other than J.F.K. in mind. She asked if there were someone else important in the President's limousine. On the eve of the assassination, Marina felt "twenty-two fires" toward her husband, that is, volcanic fury, out-of-control anger. The overwrought and obsessive Oswald again became "seized by the fantasy" that he was the hero of an opera, *The Queen of Spades*, who slays the visiting queen. . . . After the assassination, Marina mysteriously said that her husband "must have staked everything on one card."

Oswald was a woman-hater, the natural orientation of a youth who had been raised and taunted by voracious women. When he felt humiliated and emasculated, he resorted to violence. In July 1964, in day-long *secret* testimony before the Warren Commission, a psychiatrist asserted that shooting the President would have been the furthest thing from Oswald's mind. His anger was directed at women, not at men. . . . In the cross hairs of his telescope, Oswald must have perceived his wife and his mother. . . .

The Federal Bureau of Investigation repeatedly testified that in months-long tests it could not duplicate the alleged accuracy of Oswald's antiquated weapon. The rifle and its cheap telescopic sights could not be aligned properly on the target. The scope was mounted off-center; it was a deficiency that could not be corrected. Bullets flew high and to the right of the aiming point. (The rifle had missed a "sitting duck" at 100 feet earlier in 1963.) Experts agree that the high-strung, emotionally depleted Oswald was "fantastically lucky" in placing his shots at the *moving* target. Now we know he wasn't. . . .

By shooting the *First Lady*—the apotheosis of the sex that was his tormentor, his wife's "goddess," the most glamorous and unattainable woman in the world—the "silly little Communist runt" (Mrs. Kennedy's later description of Oswald) would symbolically be destroying his Jackie-adoring wife, who had been "driving him crazy." George de Mohrenschildt told Warren Commission investigators that "the only person I ever heard Oswald say he wanted to kill was his wife. She was annoying him all the time . . . poor guy was going out of his mind." Killing Marina would not confer immortality on him. But no First Lady had ever been slain. On learning that shots had been fired at the Presidential motorcade from Oswald's place of work, she asked, "Is Jackie all right?"

Believing the victim of a murder is perforce to have been the target is a reflection of what psychologists call "set theory." The Kennedy assassination demands an open mind. In his deranged vision, Oswald must have seen the chance at one stroke to avenge both his personal and the collective suffering of male-kind, and give the world proof of his own manhood. . . . But bullets aimed at the First Lady from the skewed rifle flew inexorably to the right and hit J.F.K.

Once one realizes the "incipient schizophrenic" was not shooting at the President (whom he admired) and that the assassination was a horrendous mistake—a typical Oswald mistake, by the way—everything falls into place. Sherlock Holmes noted that when you have eliminated the impossible, whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth.

Robert Kennedy may have stimulated conspiracy theories by informing President Johnson that he was satisfied that Oswald had acted alone and the case should be closed. One door he wanted kept locked and bolted was the Government's sundry plots to murder Fidel Castro. J.F.K., after all, had been in the assassination business himself. If "the mob" had shot J.F.K., R.F.K. would have pursued it to the ends of the earth.

Jerome Agel

AND DONNER

South Norwalk, Conn.

Mr. Agel's is a beguiling hypothesis. However, it seems to me that Mr. Agel confounds a possible motive ("*cherchez la femme!*") with intention, evidence of which while not conclusive is reasonably clear. Nor is Oswald's lack of animus against J.F.K. especially persuasive: no American assassin has ever viewed his victim with great personal hostility.

Frank Donner

POETRY APPRECIATED

New York City

I was delighted to see the two poems in the January 26 issue ["Turning Stones" by Marc Salveggio and "The Room" by William Stafford]. My impression is that *The Nation* has been publishing fewer poems in the last year or so than was its policy in the past, so I hope these excellent contributions mark a recommitment to the magazine's historic role as a discerning friend of the art. It would be a shame if in this age of increasing overspecialization *The Nation* no longer felt that its readers cared about poetry. We do, we do!

Nina Weinstein

WORKERS MUST PAY

Chicago

William K. Tabb ["Playing 'Productivity' Politics," *The Nation*, Jan. 5–12] makes a good point when he complains that "the economists' measure of productivity . . . falsely equates increases in output with improvements in the standard of living." But he seems to lose track of that point when he discusses workers' demands for wage increases to meet the higher cost of living.

Wage increases, no matter how large, can buy only what is produced, and if part of our production goes to "nonmarket outputs," such as improvements in the environment and safety, then part of workers' compensation has to go for that sort of output, too. We can't have it both ways.

Helen Bugbee

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EDITORIALS.

The Corruptors

Unfortunately, the battle over how the Federal Bureau of Investigation will one day be chartered and its role at last legally defined is taking place in the public prints with dubious informers, fake sheiks and agents (provocative or not) holding center stage behind their masks. One trouble with police use of informers and infiltrators, notoriously, is that these characters tend to be independent operators, out of control of their controllers and operating for their own accounts. It has already been revealed (or leaked) that at least one of the F.B.I.'s Abscamites adapted the technique for netting Congressmen on the take to running a nice little freelance swindle of his own with the fake-Arab millions as his bait. Still, we're told by law enforcers of all kinds, the police must take these risks, and those of entrapment too, if they are to catch white-collar malefactors.

The Abscam operation by Judge Webster's F.B.I. is troubling on many grounds, and not least for constitutional reasons. We have here, after all, the executive branch acting to discredit the legislature, doing it long before any possibility of actual indictments of Congressmen, and then daring to try to stop the legislature's own investigation of its allegedly implicated members on the ground that this would prevent the ultimate doing of justice. The Justice Department's line was, "Let the dark (leaked) cloud hang over the Capitol until we're ready to prosecute sometime in the future." Roman dictators used that tactic against the Senate as the Republic moved toward extinction twenty centuries ago.

J. Edgar Hoover, of course, used informers and all sorts of *agents provocateurs* in an outrageous way, as readers of this journal have known for more than a generation. But when it came to Congress, the awful Hoover preferred blackmail to prosecution and his private files went to Presidents for their delectation and possible use. In some ways, that was worse than what is going on in the Administration of "Why Not the Best?." But whatever his sleazy reasons,

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the constitutional boundaries were somehow less violated in the bad old days of Hoover.

To say that is hardly to bow toward the catafalque of Hoover. In fact, the recent revelation (from a leaked Justice Department report) that Hoover scandalously blocked the prosecution of the Ku Klux Klan members who planted a bomb near the Birmingham Baptist Church in 1963 and killed four black children, is a chilling reminder of the F.B.I.'s long, lawless history. In that dreadful case, the Director hid the evidence from his "superiors" in the Justice Department. Fourteen years after the bombing, one of the bombers was prosecuted and went to jail for his ghastly crime. A secret police force (which is what the F.B.I. has always been) always behaves in that irresponsible way.

The lessons of all this are clear and enumerable: that the informer system, endemic to all secret police organizations, and the requirements of a truly open society are inevitably in tension; that for all the media attention to such glamorous F.B.I. practices as tapping, bugging and break-ins, the use of informants may be at the heart of the runaway F.B.I.; that the public image of the informant as one who *offers* the Government information is at odds with the Bureau's use of informants as active undercover agents; that proposals for requiring "informer warrants," while perhaps a step in the right direction, may be insufficient to bring the Bureau's informants under control; that in addition to other shortcomings in the latest version of the proposed F.B.I. charter (inadequate civil remedies, no ban on COINTELPRO-type activities, insufficient controls over access to private records, etc.), its ultimate weakness may be its failure to come to grips with the Bureau's use of informants. Under what standards may they be employed? What external authority can exercise adequate control over them? How can they be kept out of First Amendment-protected organizations? How to insulate the information-gathering function from the undercover function, and by what standards should the latter ever be justified? Until such matters are systematically addressed, any talk of chartering the intelligence agencies is premature—a reversion to Hooverism without Hoover.

Laudable Leaks

Because Abscam has raised a welter of civil liberties issues, we have published, in addition to our own editorials on the subject ("The Abscam Caper," February 16; "Breaching the Shield," February 23, and the comment above), a series of contrasting views, including those of law professors Stephen Gillers and Paul Chevigny last week on the issue of entrapment. Now, our own Robert Sherrill has his say in defense of leaks. —The Editors

Your editorial, "The Abscam Caper," gives off an air of something—do I detect prissiness? a pharisaical niceness?—like *The Nation*'s rebuke of Ida Tarbell for treating too "sensationally" the evils of Standard Oil. I suspect that the reason for *The Nation*'s unhappiness in 1904 was that Tarbell's stuff had first appeared in *McClure's* magazine, and now it is unhappy with the Federal Bureau of Investigation because that agency allowed its secret investigation to be shared by others than *The Nation*. Envy is not something to be ashamed of. In fact, it makes us all try harder. But why not admit our envy?

In any event, before handing out any further sermons on constitutional rights, I think *The Nation*'s editorial directors should ask themselves this question: If the F.B.I. had given this material to us to use exclusively, would we have used it?

If the answer is no, then preach away. But you might also want to ask yourself if *The Nation* should not gracefully suspend operations until a more perfect day.

You may call the F.B.I.'s leaks "prejudicial publicity" but I call them just plain leaks, and leaks, as you know very well, are endemic to government. There is no way to stop them and I, for one, would not want to. Leaks—from scurvy bureaucrats, from ax-grinding bureaucrats, from high-minded bureaucrats, from revenge-minded bureaucrats, from the noble "whistle blowers" that *The Nation* on other occasions has praised—serve us well; they offer the only practical way for the public to stay even with the crooks in government.

Watergate was, of course, nothing but a flood of leaks. Many believe that the chief leakers were high-level officials in the F.B.I. Would you now call back their leaks? I doubt it. "Especially disturbing is that such misconduct has been directed against elected officials at the beginning of an election year," the editorial complained. Do you feel that way retroactively? Would it have bothered you if Deep Throat—assuming he was a top F.B.I. official—had unloaded enough of his stuff in the 1972 election to put Senator McGovern in the White House? Again, I doubt it. Well, surely *The Nation* wants to be catholic in its acceptance of prejudicial publicity, whether it hurts unsavory Republicans like Nixon or unsavory Democrats like Senator Harrison A. Williams Jr.

Finally, let me point out that for many years *The Nation* has quite properly damned the F.B.I. for failing to go after anything but car thieves and comsymps. Now that the agency seems very modestly inclined to start cracking down on organized crime and white-collar crime—two categories into which most Congressmen fit—I think it is a bit churlish of you to knock the G-men's efforts, however clumsily performed.

I suggest you save your vague constitutional purities (the lawyer as alchemist) for the day when the good guys have a chance of winning, which isn't today or tomorrow or in your lifetime. Meanwhile, let's let the bad guys—the F.B.I. and Congress included—knock one another off. You apparently have no idea how many of us desperate citizens that would please: citizens who are convinced that the only escape from unjust government is for our unjust rulers to destroy one another. A shoot-out at the O.K. Subconstitutional Corral. I share their feeling and welcome Abscam—and let's not forget Brilab—as a small step in that direction.

ROBERT SHERRILL

Robert Sherrill is The Nation*'s White House correspondent.*

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CJR Pains

It is always bad news when an editor gets sacked for what appear to be reasons of politics. In the case of Robert Manoff, fired last week as editor of the *Columbia Journalism Review*, it is too soon to know all the facts, but the abrupt manner of his dismissal, on the eve of an issue containing at least three articles calculated to agitate the powers that be, has about it the odor of academic politics. The March-April issue of the review includes Prof. Edward Said's analysis of racism in mainstream American media coverage of the Iranians, Andrew Kopkind on the unsavory politics of Jamaica's *Daily Gleaner* (which was recently given an award by the Columbia Graduate School of Journalism), and Todd Gitlin's critique of establishment press mis-coverage of the radicals of the 1960s.

Some months ago we were pleased to join with Manoff and *CJR* as organizers and sponsors of an amicus brief on behalf of *The Progressive* magazine in its fight against prior restraint by the U.S. Government. We hope such crusades did not contribute to his problems. We admired and learned from the *Review* under his editorship and are sorry to see him go. As in all such cases, there are charges and countercharges having to do with editorial competence, administrative efficiency. Such matters are, at this stage, beyond our ken. But if the smell of political censorship hanging over this affair is not dissipated, it will be especially sad tidings, since it is the role of *CJR* as a journalism review to set the highest standards for a free press, not to violate them.

The Savak-C.I.A. Connection

As the international tribunal prepares to hear evidence of human rights violations in Iran during the reign of the Shah, new attention is focused on the issue of U.S. involvement in these crimes. In a series of interviews conducted last week, *The Nation* obtained testimony that the Central Intelligence Agency had knowledge of instances of Savak torture, that the Agency trained Savak agents in "interrogation techniques" both in Teheran and the United States and that the C.I.A.'s knowledge of Savak torture was kept from the American public for more than a quarter of a century, most recently by an American television network.

The fact of torture and murder on a substantial scale by the Shah's regime is no longer in question. As last week's issue of *The Nation* depicted in gruesome detail (see Reza Baraheni, "The Savak Documents"), Savak maimed and slew its victims in a systematic campaign of atrocities. Informed estimates of the numbers killed between the August 1953 coup and the Shah's ouster in 1979 vary, but the best guess is that between 10,000 and 15,000 people lost their lives at the hands of the Shah's police.

The involvement of the C.I.A. in these atrocities has long been alleged. Now, information we have gathered proves beyond a reasonable doubt that the C.I.A. did indeed "unofficially" know about human rights violations under the Shah and kept silent about them. For more than twenty years U.S. officials publicly denied the existence of torture in Iran, or played down its significance. As late as 1976, Alfred Atherton, then Assistant Secretary of State, told a Congressional committee that he did not believe there was torture in Iran, although he admitted there was "harsh treatment."

In an interview with *The Nation*, Jesse Leaf, a former C.I.A. political analyst with extensive involvement in Iranian matters, said: "The Atherton '76 statement was bullshit. Of course we were aware [of Savak torture]. It was common knowledge. Being based in Washington, I constantly heard 'war stories' from returning agents about Savak torture. . . . In 1972 when a lot of stuff came out from Amnesty International and other sources about Savak torture, I wanted to pull the information together for a C.I.A. memo on the subject. I was told not to prepare the report."

A second retired C.I.A. expert on Iran, with more than twenty-eight years in the Agency, ten of them in Iran, told *The Nation*: "Yes, we all heard stories—I personally started hearing them in the early '50s—and we assumed that a lot of them were true, because that is the way things are done in that part of the world. But we did not have 'positive proof' of torture because . . . we never officially investigated it. If we had gotten a request, we would have collected information. But we did not receive any orders. Besides, it was not our job to monitor Savak prisons."

When we come to the question of U.S. involvement in torture training, the truth remains more elusive. Leaf maintained that "I became aware through unofficial channels that the C.I.A. set up seminars in Teheran in extensive interrogation techniques. I believe that one of the source books for the seminars was a Nazi volume." But another agent told *The Nation* categorically that no torture classes run by the C.I.A. were set up in Iran. "This rumor boggles my mind," he said. "I don't think the C.I.A. even has a Nazi interrogation book in its library." Yet this same agent did admit that when the C.I.A. set up Savak in 1957 at the behest of the Shah, a series of classes and seminars were organized by the Agency to teach Iranian personnel the fundamentals of an intelligence organization. One of these classes was in interrogation techniques "of a normal police type." *The Nation* was also told by a C.I.A. source that between "ten and a hundred" Iranian officers, Savak agents and Savak Internal Security Division members (the squad responsible for domestic repression and torture) received training at the International Police Academy (I.P.A.) and the International Police Services School, both located in Washington, D.C. (According to State Department documents obtained by *The Nation*, 179 Iranians received police and intelligence training from 1963 to 1973. One graduate was made chief of Savak upon his return.)

These C.I.A.-sponsored institutions, under the "cover" of the Office of Public Safety of the Agency for International Development, trained Third World police officers

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and intelligence agents in various "craft techniques" up until 1975 when Congress abolished the program. In Congressional testimony on the I.P.A. in 1974, Daniel Parker, then director of the A.I.D., admitted, "The subject 'Interviews and Interrogations' is taught as part of criminal investigation specialty courses. . . . While the means are neutral it is quite possible that at some later date the police trained here may participate in repression."

If, at the least, the C.I.A. officially turned a blind eye to Savak torture, it was not only the intelligence bureaucracy that participated in the cover-up. While some information of Savak torturing was published in the U.S. press, including *Time* magazine, in the mid-1970s, other press organizations have seen fit to continue to play down U.S. knowledge and association with Savak's macabre activities.

The Nation has learned that in the course of an interview with *ABC News* last December in Teheran, Sean McBride, the Irish diplomat and former president of Amnesty International, stated that the C.I.A. had knowledge of specific instances of Savak torture up until the final weeks before the Shah's fall. ABC correspondent Barry Serafin, the principal interviewer, confirmed to us that after McBride talked a bit about a possible international commission to investigate the crimes of the Shah, "Bill Blakemore and I went into the past stuff with him. He told us what he knew about some of the torture charges against Savak. . . . Yes, I think he said the C.I.A. knew what was going on all along."

For his part, Serafin admits he doesn't recall whether the controversial portion of the McBride piece was ever aired. "But I certainly did not suppress the story. There was no effort to suppress on my part. I actively pursued the subject. I don't remember if the film was ever even sent out, it was so long ago. . . . But you know, the important thing about the McBride visit to Teheran was his effort to release the hostages. *That* was the story."

McBride's allegations were never aired in the United States. Somewhere along the line an *ABC News* producer decided not to use the material. Indeed, repeated calls to *ABC News* have failed to confirm whether the McBride charges were subsequently followed up by the news staff.*

The full story of the nature of the relationship between the C.I.A. and Savak has yet to come out. Presumably, when all the facts are known the American people can address the moral question of the type of relationship our country should have with an "ally" that maintains a brutal regime. For now, though, one thing is clear: the truth will never come out if C.I.A. officials, the Federal Government and national news organizations continue to ignore the sorry spectacle of torture abroad.

CARL KAPLAN and FRED HALLIDAY

*As we went to press, an ABC spokesman said that McBride's charges were aired by Blakemore in an editorial essay on ABC Radio's *Perspective*, Sunday, February 17.

Carl Kaplan is a former assistant editor of the New Leader. *Fred Halliday is a fellow of the Transnational Institute, Amsterdam. Financial assistance for this story was given by the Fund for Investigative Journalism.*

Cherry Tree

Welcome to *Meet the Nation*. Our guest this morning is Gen. George Washington, the military hero who, as you all know, is seeking to become the first President of the United States. I'm Thomas Paine of *Common Sense*, and with me are Benjamin Franklin of *The Pennsylvania Gazette* and Alexander Hamilton of *The Federalist Papers*. We'll begin the questioning with Mr. Franklin.

Franklin: General Washington, a lot of people say that because of the Cherry Tree incident you are not morally fit to become President. Would you care to comment?

Washington: Mr. Franklin, I think the record has been laid out. I told my father that I could not tell a lie. I would hope that the voters would accept that, just as my father did, and that they would judge my candidacy on my record of service as a military leader.

Franklin: Right after you chopped down the cherry tree, you disappeared for twenty-four hours. What were you doing during that period?

Washington: As I explained to the truant officer in our statement at the time, I was out searching for another cherry tree to replace the one that was cut down. You look back on a situation like that, and you can think of a hundred things you would have liked to have done differently with the wisdom of hindsight. But that's the course I chose. And I'd like to say, Mr. Franklin, that the twenty-four hours was the most agonizing period I ever spent. You can't imagine what it's like to go tromping through the woods in the middle of February for hours trying to pull a cherry tree out of frozen ground.

Hamilton: General Washington, what are your feelings now about Cherry Tree?

Washington: Mr. Hamilton, I can tell you that I live with Cherry Tree every day of my life, and I think I'm a very different person than I was prior to Cherry Tree, even though my analyst says that I should not feel guilty.

Hamilton: Why does he say that?

Washington: He told me that chopping down the cherry tree was a way of working through my Oedipus complex, of displacing the father figure, as it were. He said that this often takes dramatic form in people with political ambitions.

Hamilton: A desire to be father of your country, you mean?

Washington: That's right, although I would really prefer not to go into the subject any further. You will be receiving a complete account of the entire incident from my adviser Parson Weems.

Paine: Thank you, General. Our time is up. Next week on *Meet the Nation*: Thomas Jefferson discusses Sally Hemings.

EDWARD B. FISKE

Edward B. Fiske is education editor of The New York Times.

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SECOND THOUGHTS

CAREY McWILLIAMS

When I set out in the 1920s to write a biography of Ambrose Bierce, which was published in 1929 and is still in print [*Ambrose Bierce: A Biography*], I had a wonderful time reading Bierce's "Prattle" column, which appeared in William Randolph Hearst's *The San Francisco Examiner* from 1887 to 1901, and irregularly from then until 1909, when he stopped writing it. "Prattle," to be appreciated, should be read in the context of the headlines and news stories of the time. For example, Bierce's savage comments about the Spanish-American War—that "splendid little war"—take on added zest when contrasted with the flamboyant headlines, often three inches high, and flag-waving editorials. "Prattle" appeared on the editorial page and usually consisted of a number of paragraphs about different and often unrelated topics. Every column was a delight, but I particularly enjoyed his running commentary on the Spanish-American War, which he referred to as the Yanko-Spanko War.

But now, after all these years, a brilliant young scholar at the University of Michigan's Dearborn campus named Lawrence Berkove has collected all that Bierce had to say about the Spanish-American War, including the Philippines and some items about the Boxer Rebellion and the Boer War, so that the material can be read in its entirety and not as separate, discontinuous items in a column. The effect is to heighten the impact of the material and to stimulate the reader's interest. Bierce was a notoriously erratic judge of his own work and failed to include any of his Spanish-American War material in the *Collected Works* edition of 1909-12. Yet it represents some of his best journalism. With only two minor exceptions, none of this material has been previously published in book form, so Berkove's work represents a valuable addition to the corpus of Bierce's writings in the area of national and international issues and displays to full effect his skills as a journalist.

Part of the interest of the volume, which contains a valuable introduction by Berkove (*Ambrose Bierce: Skepticism and Dissent. Selected Journalism from 1898-1901.* 295 pp. $13.95 plus $1 for postage and handling. Delmas Books. 4605 Five Mile Road, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48105), is attributable to the fact that the era of the Spanish-American War can now be seen as an extraordinarily important chapter in American history. All of the articles Berkove has selected were written during this short but crucial period, which saw the launching of the American "empire."

The years 1898-1901 marked a turning point for America. This country was abruptly metamorphosed into a world power; it was forced to make important decisions on short notice. Bierce was skeptical of both the official rhetoric and the decisions themselves. Having served with distinction in the Union Army in the Civil War, he knew something about wars and the military. For him the Spanish-American War stirred deep and painful memories of the days he had spent soldiering at Shiloh and Chickamauga. He asked pointed, irreverent questions. He sought the full truth. His comments about tactics and strategy were brilliant, often savagely satirical, invariably right on target. It is a tribute to Hearst that he permitted Bierce to have his unrestricted say about a war which Hearst had done so much to promote. There is no evidence that he ever attempted to tell Bierce to knock it off, although there is one period when Bierce's silence on the issue of Cuba is difficult to explain or understand.

Here are a few samples of Bierce's commentary selected at random. Taking note that Republicans were upset by the fact that some Democrats were critical of the way the war was being waged in Luzon, Bierce offered this comment:

> Freedom of speech is our proudest boast. We accord it even to those in whom it is attended with an impediment of thought. The bawling anarchist may utter himself along four streets at once, unafraid. The twaddling Prohibitionist becomes audible at his own sweet will, and the song of the Christian Scientist is heard in the land. . . . Shall we, then, tie the tongue of persons who may chance to think a certain war unjust or inexpedient? . . . In the long run is it not better that the party in power be restrained by wholesome respect for criticism? In war-time the temptations besetting the strong ambitious men who are likely to mount into "the seats of power" are peculiarly irresistible; the opportunities for usurpation are peculiarly wide and inviting; the constitutional barriers are peculiarly surmountable. If ever vigilant watching and sharp criticism are needful they are needful then. . . . It will be an unhappy day for this Republic when the sound of criticism is stilled by the roar of cannon and the voice of dissent is not "heard through rolling drums." *Inter arma silent leges*, the proverb hath it, but silent indeed, and silent forever, will be the laws of this country, and forever extinguished its liberties, when "the party in power" is no longer required to hear and answer the objections of a vigilant and vigorous opposition, even if these objections are not altogether valid, unselfish, and just.

And these thoughts about the wicked Spanish enemy:

> Yes, we can beat these soft spoken, temperate and picturesque Spaniards—beat them boasting, beat them in swearing, beat them in battle and lie about them afterward as we did before—as during the period of our own dissension we lied about one another. We can thrash them consummately and every day of the week, but we cannot understand them; and is it not a great golden truth, shining like a star, that what one does not understand one knows to be bad? Yet at the end of it all, when the clamor of battle is heard no more upon the hills and the ocean no longer shivers from the shock of great guns, it may dawn upon us, slowly in the mild, dry light of a growing revelation, that the Spaniard is not so very bad a chap after all. And each elated American laying off his armor may perhaps hear and heed the still small voice of the conscience in his breast as it ventures to whisper: "And, pray, which of the saints are you?"

American journalism, in this age of the tube, could make good use of a journalist with Bierce's talents. But since no such talent is discernible we can at least read *Skepticism and Dissent*, which is amazingly apposite to our times. □

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ARTICLES.

Russians

(Continued From Front Cover)

taking these steps was too weak to prevent a major reversal of his foreign policy.

Even if one were to accept the possibility that Brezhnev could have been overridden by a Politburo majority, it is hard to imagine where that majority would have come from on the Afghanistan question. The Politburo has fourteen voting members. Five (Chernenko, Kirilenko, Kunaev, Shcherbitsky and Tikhonov) have been extremely close lieutenants—almost creatures—of Brezhnev for decades. The Minister of Defense, Ustinov, has worked closely with Brezhnev since 1956, when Brezhnev became the Central Committee secretary in charge of heavy industry, the defense industry and the Sputnik space program. Ustinov is the only Politburo member besides Kirilenko whom Brezhnev has publicly addressed (on television) with the personal form of "you" (*ty*) that denotes very close friendship. If one assumes that Kosygin and Gromyko support détente, an anti-Brezhnev majority in favor of invasion would have been impossible to assemble.

Brezhnev has been at the heart of the Soviet military-industrial complex for forty years, and it is easy to imagine him taking a hard-line action. What seems farfetched, however, is that he or some majority group in the Politburo would decide to invade as a step toward a further invasion of Pakistan or the seizure of the Strait of Hormuz. Such an action would bring the Soviet Union to the brink of World War III, and this would require a crisis leadership able to work for fifteen to twenty hours a day. Brezhnev is too ill to work even eight hours a day, and he surely would have to be pushed aside in a major crisis. Since his major goal for fifteen years has been to solidify his personal political position (even to the point of preventing the rise of an heir apparent and surrounding himself with cronies like Tikhonov), it boggles the mind to think that he would deliberately take a step that might require his removal.

Other members of the Politburo might function in a crisis, but Pel'she is 80, Suslov 77, Kosygin 75, Tikhonov 74, Kirilenko 73, Ustinov 71 and Gromyko 70. Five other members average 65 years of age, while even the one "young" voting member, Romanov, at age 56, is scarcely a boy. Why in heaven's name would an aging Politburo that had followed a cautious policy for years suddenly want to put the country on a war footing, especially at a time when the Iranian hostage crisis was threatening to embroil the United States in actions that might create enormous enmity in the Moslem world and provide the Soviet Union with a cost-free bonanza?

The notion that the military could have forced through an action against the wishes of the Politburo flies even more completely in the face of everything that we know. Although there is some pluralism in the Soviet political system, it is absurd to imagine that the Soviet Union is so pluralistic that one such interest group can impose its will over the objections of the party leadership. The Soviet Union is, after all, a party dictatorship.

How then are we to interpret the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan? On the basis of conversations that I had between December 17 and January 12 in Moscow with Soviet foreign affairs specialists, two possibilities emerge.

The usual answer given by Soviet scholars was that Afghanistan had long been in the Soviet sphere of influence and that the collapse of a Communist regime on the Soviet border could not be tolerated, especially when it would be replaced by a fundamentalist Islamic regime that might arouse fellow Moslems in the Central Asian republics of the Soviet Union. When asked why the Soviet Union acted at a time when American nerves were on edge and an invasion of a Moslem country would get President Carter off the hook in Iran, the answer was that the situation was grave. One school of thought held that the Afghan army was dissolving and the regime would collapse within a matter of weeks; another believed that Hafizullah Amin was threatening to become another Tito.

A second possible answer—although no Soviet scholar suggested it directly—is that the Soviet leadership has become fascinated with the game of geopolitics. The Soviet press gave great attention to the American military buildup in the Middle East during the hostage crisis. Before the Afghanistan invasion, scholars drew an analogy with Mexico. What, they said, if someone had seized the Soviet Embassy in Mexico City and demanded, say, the return of some Mexican Communist? What if, in response, the Soviet Union had assembled an armada off the Mexican coast and threatened a blockade or even a punitive military action? What would the United States do in such a case? Why, they asked, do you think our leaders will react differently to a buildup of military force off a country on our southern border?

Seen in that perspective, the invasion would have served two functions: one, the reversal of a deteriorating situation in Afghanistan and, two, the stationing of troops in Afghanistan to "counterbalance" the increase of American forces in the area. As one young scholar from the Institute of the USA and Canada stated curtly, "If we can't cooperate on limitation of forces in the Persian Gulf, we'll each go our own way."

Of course, we probably would be wrong to assume that the Afghanistan invasion involved a thorough, balanced and correct evaluation of how best to harmonize a medley of Soviet interests. Brezhnev and Kosygin were ill, and Georgii Arbatov, the director of the Institute of the USA and Canada, entered the hospital the night of the Central Committee session with a heart attack. All the evidence suggests that the Soviet Union took the Administration seriously when it said the grain weapon would not be used, and it is

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always possible that the information from Afghanistan was unduly alarmist. It is hard to believe that the potential backlash in the Moslem world was adequately assessed.

One particular aspect of the Soviet scene which may have played a part in the decision and which is poorly understood in America is a widespread anger with the United States—a feeling of deep affront. Words like double-cross, below-the-belt, unreliable, double standard and untrustworthy pour out in conversations. Basically, the United States is seen as hypocritical—condemning as violative of the code of détente Soviet behavior that it feels free to engage in itself. It is accused of promising most-favored-nation treatment in exchange for an increase in emigration and then upping the price by demanding the withdrawal of a brigade from Cuba. The decisions to install in Europe Pershing missiles and cruise missiles that can hit the Soviet Union in four minutes are seen as cynical violations of the SALT treaty.

What is worse, these actions are not regarded as accidental, to use a favorite Soviet expression. There is a chronic tendency toward conspiracy thinking in the Soviet Union, but in this case everyone agrees on the name of the chief conspirator. Zbigniew Brzezinski is described as not simply anti-Communist but as deeply anti-Russian—a man who wants to humiliate Russians and make them suffer, who is obsessed with breaking up the Russian control of the non-Russian borders and of the East European countries, and who (like many Poles in the past) seriously underestimates the likelihood of a Soviet response. In the words of one Soviet foreign policy specialist, "he plays chess, thinking only one move ahead at a time."

Soviet scholars are often accused of serving as mere propaganda agents in their conversations with foreigners, but this is a real oversimplification, at least in their conversations in Russian with Western specialists. In any case, the views I heard were not expressed solely in formal interviews, but also in conversation at the homes of longtime friends.

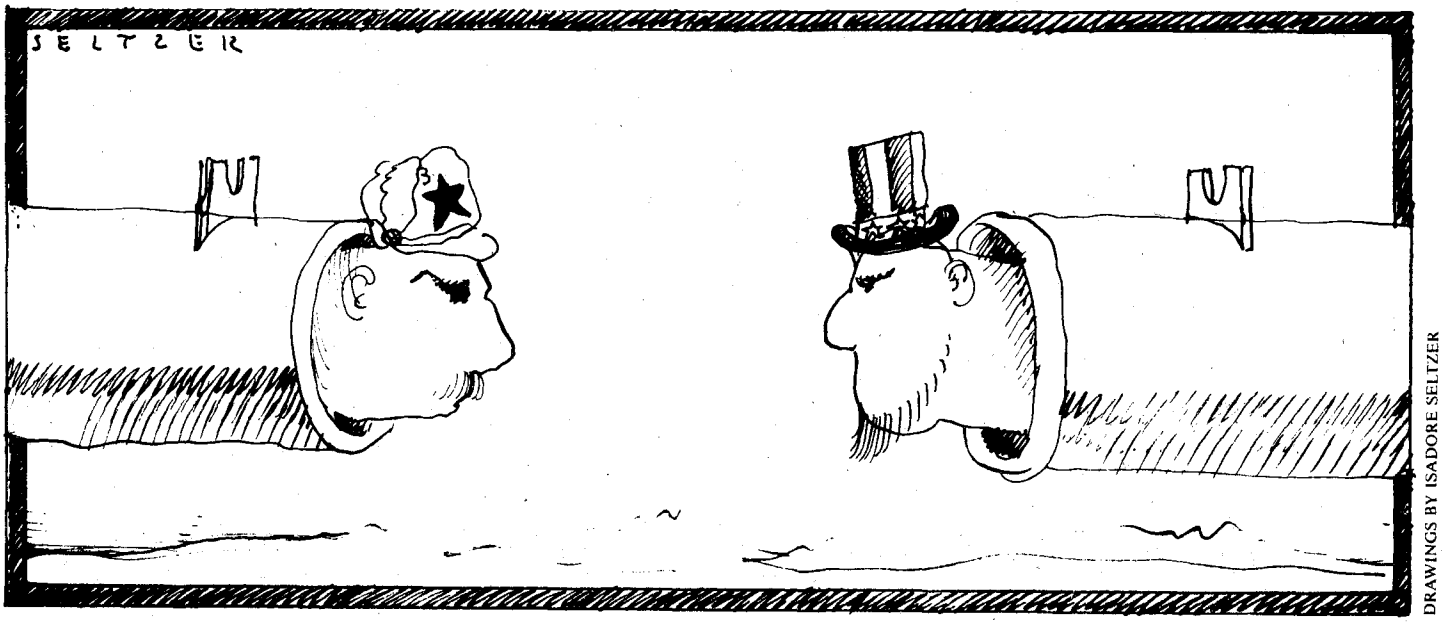
The late Igor Sats, who was one of Tvardovsky's editors on the liberal journal *Novyi mir*, was removed in 1970 with Tvardovsky and thus had no reason to feel warmly toward Brezhnev. Yet, one evening in December—before the Afghanistan invasion and the grain embargo—he described the Carter Administration's policy as "economic war" against the Soviet Union and its people. He had in mind not only trade restrictions but also the NATO commitments to increase military expenditures, which he saw as an attempt to force the Soviet Union to strain its economy to keep up.

The previous evening, one of the leading Soviet liberal intellectuals within the establishment, and one of the most vocal supporters of détente and of greater democratization within the framework of the Communist system, had also spontaneously used the identical phrase "economic war." He expressed virtual despair about an Administration that professed a policy of human rights but that seemed determined to solidify the forces of reaction among the Russian people and the Soviet regime.

These feelings of anger and grievance are clearly an influence on Soviet policy. American Embassy sources report that when Arbatov was asked at a reception why the Soviet Union did not help in the Iranian crisis he retorted angrily: "Why should we when your policy has been so hostile?" The desire "to show the Americans" may well have been an element in Afghanistan policy, even to the extent of preventing a balanced judgment of the costs and benefits.

Of course, for Americans today the crucial question is not the motivation of past Soviet behavior but of future Soviet conduct. Even if the purpose of the invasion were purely one of pacification, troops sent for one purpose could serve other functions. As the Soviet military reads repeated American assertions about the great strategic importance of its new position, it certainly could be excused for coming to believe this, even if the thought had not occurred to them beforehand. Troops in position can be used at a later time for purposes that were not envisaged by the leaders who sent them in. Conversely, a decision to solidify a military position could be reversed if the costs turned out to exceed the benefits.

In predicting the future, we should not forget our role in it. It would be wise to remind the Soviet Union that a mili-



DRAWINGS BY ISADORE SELTZER

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tary thrust to seize the Persian Gulf would almost surely lead to a tactical nuclear response at a minimum, for whatever one thinks about the wisdom of such an action, the public response to Iran and Afghanistan shows that it would be inevitable. It is, however, one thing to fire a warning shot across the Soviet bow and another to become so obsessed with punishment for the sake of punishment that one leaves oneself with no cards to play as deterrents in the future.

What do we do now if the Soviet Union ends emigration, if it sends tens of thousands of troops to Syria or Libya and stations them on the Egyptian and Israeli borders at the real invitation of the legal Governments, if it develops a military relationship with Argentina or Brazil as part of a grain deal?

Our first priority should be to induce the withdrawal of the bulk of Soviet troops from Afghanistan and the establishment of a system of really meaningful incentives and penalties that will affect Soviet decisions in the future. In particular, we should be working toward a situation that will reduce the need of the Soviet Union for petroleum rather than one which will cut its production, increase its military's consumption and make Soviet incentive to seize the Persian Gulf greater.

But this will require an American acceptance of a code of détente that applies equally to both great powers, and we are a long way from accepting the kind of restraints on ourselves that we demand from the Russians and from tolerating Soviet behavior that we take for granted as permissible for ourselves. The same forces that are leading the charge against the Soviet Union will be the first to call for invocation of the Monroe Doctrine if Guatemala or El Salvador undergo internal Communist revolutions. □

NICARAGUA'S UNEASY COALITION

Sandinismo After the Fall

CLIFFORD KRAUSS

On a sweltering Nicaraguan evening last March, Radio Sandino announced that the three militant Sandinist National Liberation Front Tendencies had reunified. The end of three years of internecine bickering among two avowedly Marxist factions—the Popular Prolonged War Tendency (G.P.P.) and the Proletarian Tendency (T.P.)—and one bourgeois democratic group, the Tercerista Tendency, made possible the "final offensive" that overthrew Anastasio Somoza four months later. This remarkably heterotypical coalition was difficult enough to establish while there was a common enemy. Now that Somoza is comparing notes with Gen. Alfredo Stroessner in Paraguay, it appears inevitable that the moderates and radicals will clash over the pace and depth of the revolution.

Clifford Krauss covered the Sandinist revolution in Nicaragua before the fall of Somoza for United Press International.

Western journalists have suggested as much without going so far as to predict open conflict between the three Sandinist factions and the private business sector. Alan Riding, the veteran Nicaragua watcher for *The New York Times*, seemed to insinuate the uneasy alliance could wither with time: "*For the time being*, the country's civilian Government . . . is more intent on rebuilding the country than it is in ideological sparring" (italics added). James Nelson Goodsell, indulging in some gossip on the pages of *The Christian Science Monitor*, noted that Interior Minister Tomas Borge and Agrarian Reform Minister Jaime Wheelock, two ambitious Sandinist Directorate members of divergent ideological stripe, "studiously avoided each other at a recent United States Embassy reception." Such journalistic probing adds urgency to *Monthly Review*'s question: "Whither the Nicaraguan Revolution?" The answer—still very much in doubt—will clarify the meaning of Sandinismo, which Front revolutionaries of varied backgrounds extol as the Nicaraguan solution to the contradictions of capitalism and Communism alike, even if they are unable to spell out its precise details.

At joint press conferences Front leaders say their unity is not just a temporary arrangement but rather a unique feature of the Sandinist revolution. Simple pragmatism, however, is sufficient cause for the suspension of partisanship and polemics in a poor country that is recovering from a two-year convulsion that left 50,000 dead, the centers of five major cities destroyed and the Government's coffers empty.

A month before they forced Somoza from his bunker, Sandinist commanders appointed a five-member junta of the Provisional Government of the National Reconstruction to unite and rebuild postwar Nicaragua. Reflecting the wide spectrum represented in the new Government, the junta improbably joined Alfonso Robelo, former leader of the Supreme Council of Private Enterprise, and Moses Hassan Morales, a representative of the hard-line Marxist-Leninist G.P.P.

In peace, as in war, the various factions have found in one another allies of expedience. Capitalist reformers, who staged two crippling general strikes against Somoza, retain technical and managerial skills as well as sizable amounts of capital, but lack political clout. The Sandinists enjoy overwhelming popular support but lack the confidence of Washington and the international banking community. Sealing the alliance while still in Costa Rica, waiting for their triumphant return to Managua, the junta compromised on a program that guarantees individual liberties and private property for the reformers and massive land reform and full-employment goals for the radicals.

Members of the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee debated for several months before approving a $75 million loan and aid package to Nicaragua. At their hearings they had witnessed the confusing spectacle of green-fatigued *commandantes* and pin-striped businessmen testifying side by side. The program may still face stiff opposition before the full Senate even though 60 percent of the aid would go

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directly to the private sector and the entire program would become void if Soviet troops were invited to Nicaragua's shores. Jaime Wheelock, the leftist former Sandinist commander who was exiled to Salvador Allende's Chile, insisted at a rally that he remained uncompromised by his support of a loan designed to shore up bourgeois interests, boasting, "We can use the money of imperialism to construct socialism." Besides, Wheelock argued, the Sandinists had little choice but to seek aid from the United States and international banking agencies in the face of a $1.5 billion foreign debt and only $3.5 million in the treasury following the war. "But this does not mean we do not intend to carry out profoundly revolutionary measures," he said.

Meanwhile, Nicaraguan entrepreneurs told the Senators the loan was just the strong dose of capitalism needed to combat the virulent strains of Marxism in the Government. They insisted that with assistance from the Roman Catholic Church and adequate financing to rebuild the country and create employment, they could foil the radicals. Yet they also praised the Sandinists for arresting dozens of Trotskyist labor agitators, who were demanding immediate wage hikes and stepped-up nationalization, and pointed to the humane treatment accorded the imprisoned Somozan National Guardsmen.

The seams began to pull apart, however, when the private sector openly attacked the Government following the publication of the economic reconstruction plan for 1980. Although the $390 million program acknowledges that the private sector is "vital" and leaves the country's most valuable cotton lands in the hands of private farmers, Robelo's own Supreme Council of Private Enterprise threatened to withdraw its support from the Sandinist Government. In a full-page advertisement published in *La Prensa*, the Council fiercely criticized the growing power of the Central Sandinista de Trabajadores, the aggressive state-supported labor union, and growing Government involvement in all sectors of the economy. During recent planning meetings, Nicaraguan business leaders even threatened to withhold investment if socialization went any further. Immediate plans for direct state control over 70 percent of the nation's construction and 25 percent of its manufacturing industries have businessmen worried.

Since an overwhelming majority of the Nicaraguan people support the Sandinists, the alienation of the private sector would not threaten their predominant political position. It would, however, touch off an immediate economic crisis. But the greatest threat to the unified Sandinist movement comes from conflicting ideologies within. The nine-member Sandinist Directorate, which retains control over the long-term planning decisions, is divided along the same ideological lines as the junta. The Directorate allots three seats to the Tercerista Tendency, a group influenced by Catholic liberation theology, and the same number to the two Marxist divisions trying to organize workers and peasants into a political machine.

The latter—the G.P.P. group and the T.P.—would like to unite behind the goal of rapid creation of a socialist society. But they diverge on political strategy. The G.P.P. is peasant-based and believes the Sandinist army must continue functioning as the politico-military vanguard from which all

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political power originates. The T.P., on the other hand, is worker-based and advocates a Leninist vanguard party.

Ideological differences surfaced in the Sandinist camp in 1975 after fourteen years of frustration and failure in the revolution against Somoza. When the National Guard killed Sandinist founder and guiding light Carlos Fonseca Amador in November 1976, a rift ensued from which the Terceristas emerged. They insisted that the time was right for major military action and cooperation with other anti-Somoza elements. The G.P.P. and the T.P. disagreed, advocating patient organizing of the "popular sectors." The Terceristas forced the issue by staging major hit-and-run attacks on several cities in October 1977 and taking the lead in the fighting until Somoza's final downfall last July 17. When Wheelock, who was commanding the T.P., held that the Sandinists should abandon guerrilla warfare to devote themselves to constructing a revolutionary proletarian party, he was purged by Borge.

The current rifts in the Sandinist ranks have delayed the founding of an organized Sandinist Party and the setting of a timetable for national elections. No one can say yet which faction or alliance of factions will emerge as the dominant force, either through elections or some less formal selective process. The Terceristas, in whom the hopes of the business community are tenuously invested, control the strongest military forces and won popular support with their daring tactics during the revolution. The radical T.P. and G.P.P. groups, basing their hopes on the urban Sandinist Defense Committees and the Rural Worker Associations respectively, are attempting to win support through political education and administration of relief and social welfare programs.

With debates over the merits of gradualism versus radicalism muted for the time being by the need to reconstruct the country, two related political questions are bound to strike sparks among the guerrilla groups: (*1*) what role will the Sandinist Front army play in post-reconstruction Nicaragua? and (*2*) will policy differences be resolved within the Sandinist fold or be contested in a pluralistic political system? To retain support of the moderates, the Front must reconcile its military role as the de facto national army with that of a political party competing fairly with other parties. But it is almost impossible to conceive of the Front remaining passive if a bourgeois party should win power in elections—unlikely as that prospect appears. In fact, during a recent New York fund-raiser for the 1980 national literacy campaign, Wheelock actually seemed to sneer at the idea of elections, calling them the kind of machinations once used by Somoza to garter the *ancien régime*. Certainly the business sector, which along with the Sandinists demanded the "depoliticalization" of Somoza's National Guard, will not tolerate permanent radical control of the armed forces.

Sandinist leaders are beginning to make conflicting statements in public. Victor Tirado, one of the three Tercerista members of the Directorate, put it bluntly at a New York press conference: "Nicaragua is not a socialist country. We're not mechanically applying any dogmatic formula." Wheelock has another interpretation for Nicaragua's moderation: "Revolutions do not come overnight." Directorate and G.P.P. leader Borge, who, as the sole surviving Sandinist founder, bears a special moral authority, said Nicaragua would move toward socialism "by stages." After returning from Cuba where he celebrated his 50th birthday party with Fidel Castro, he warned his opponents that the "Sandinist revolution is not going to fall into the trap of anti-Communism, because it is a dirty banner that has served to assassinate thousands and thousands of Nicaraguans."

Looming political battles with a wide range of possible outcomes, from pluralist to undemocratic, cannot overshadow the progress the Government has made in the reconstruction phase so far. Teachers are beginning to reach barrios and villages where illiteracy was once a permanent part of Somocista repression. Medical clinics, for the first time, are emerging in villages where the life expectancy is less than forty years. Farm land once owned by Somoza and the National Guard elite is being divided up and managed by peasant and worker cooperatives.

But uncertainty persists—perhaps because nearly everyone calls himself a Sandinist. There is already a Sandinist Social Democratic Party—which is being denounced by Borge as a front for members of the old Conservative Party—that goes by the slogan *Sandinismo sí, Comunismo no.* Indeed, the writings of César Augusto Sandino, the nationalist leader who fought the American Marines in the 1920s and 1930s, provide ideological ammunition for a wide swath of the political spectrum. Who in fact has the right to call himself a Sandinist? That is a question that won't go away soon. □

The Urban Renaissance For Business

DAVID PERRY and ALFRED WATKINS

For two decades, government programs have failed to solve the problems of central city decline. Now corporations are stepping forward and declaring themselves the potential saviors of the cities. Business promises to create a new era of "urban renaissance" marked by more jobs for the urban poor, luxury apartments for the long-absent gentry and a return of once-dilapidated neighborhoods to the tax rolls. But, the proponents of renaissance argue, the corporations cannot do this alone. If they are to return to the central cities and stimulate their growth, the people who live and work downtown must pay the piper. And the corporate piper demands a new round of austerity to insure increased profits—ways must be found to

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reduce wages and social services, weaken unions, eliminate popular control over municipal resources and get the poor to move somewhere else.

In short, the preconditions for the corporate version of urban renaissance are economic austerity and corporate domination of municipal affairs. The outlines of this scenario were traced last year at a symposium in Austin, Texas, by Felix Rohatyn, the head of New York's Municipal Assistance Corporation. In describing the policies used to restore investor confidence in New York City, he listed such "unpopular but necessary" austerity measures as a 30 percent increase in transit fares, the imposition of tuition at the City University, wage freezes and deferrals, a 20 percent reduction in the city work force and a cut in property taxes to lower land acquisition costs for the real estate industry. Most important, Rohatyn argued, "the direction and philosophy of a large unit of government was fundamentally and permanently changed as a result of the involvement, some would say the intrusion, of the private sector into government." Rohatyn and other major corporate officials at the symposium concluded that corporation intrusion must spread to all cities "because the United States today is in many ways similar to New York in 1975."

Not surprisingly, the burdens of corporate plans for renaissance fall mainly on the poor. Former Treasury Secretary Michael Blumenthal recently argued that "any realistic program will involve short-term sacrifices. The object, after all, is to forgo consumption today so as to build up our ability to produce tomorrow." The type of sacrifices Blumenthal desires were spelled out in greater detail by Amitai Etzioni, professor of sociology at Columbia University. He suggests that we place a low priority on "the demands for greater social justice," which direct resources "to the underprivileged poor and minorities."

Corporate spokesmen are confident that the residents of the most blighted central cities will accept reduced social services in exchange for more jobs. During the 1960s, racial tensions and strident neighborhood opposition repelled an earlier version of urban renaissance known as urban renewal. But, after more than a decade of continuous job losses, out-migration and neighborhood deterioration, Rohatyn and his allies believe that the working class can be forced to abandon both the social welfare programs and union militancy that drove capital away in the first place.

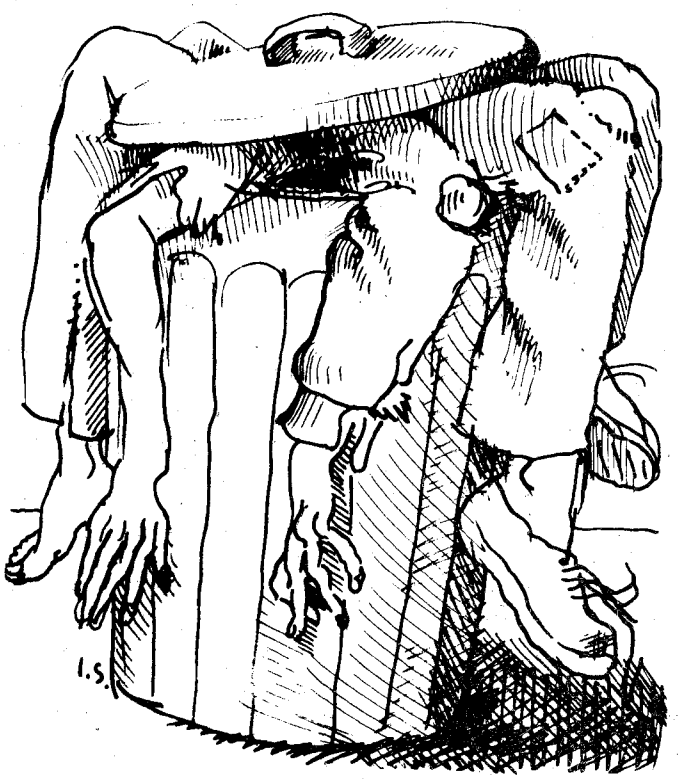
Urban renaissance, therefore, rests upon an economic foundation of austerity designed to create a "good business climate" in which corporations are not burdened with high taxes or social welfare costs. It represents neither "renaissance" for the already beleaguered working class nor neighborhood revitalization for the current city residents. Like the urban renewal programs of the 1960s, it is designed to increase corporate profits in the central cities. But this time around, the rhetoric will not even pay lip service to such issues as social welfare and community control.

Although the rhetoric of austerity will be heard everywhere, not every city can expect similar patterns of revitalization. Some authors define renaissance as the creation of "a glistening office skyscraper and luxury apartment complex." They mistakenly suggest that every city will experience an identical transformation. The impetus of this transformation will be the replacement of slum and blue-collar factory districts in the inner city with towering new corporate headquarters.

Such a transformation might occur if every city served the same economic function. Most economists, however, recognize two distinct city types: headquarter cities and factory cities. The former house the central administrative, financial and cultural activities servicing major corporations. Their land, labor, office and residential requirements differ significantly from those of the factory cities, which house only low-level managerial activities and substantial numbers of blue-collar workers. As a result, revitalization strategies in factory cities will differ from those in headquarter cities.

In headquarter cities, plans for newly refurbished downtowns stress the redevelopment of land—the same land that only a few years ago was classified as economically irretrievable. More often than not, this land contained empty warehouses, pornography districts, slums and burned out "riotscapes." Whenever city politicians raised property and business taxes to pay for additional social services, they cut into profit margins, creating a cycle of further abandonment and physical decay, a greater need by the poor for social services and so on. The spreading blight hastened the exodus of corporate offices from the central business districts to the suburbs and Sunbelt, where labor and land were cheaper and taxes lower.

The recent return of the corporations to their downtown skyscrapers, however, suggests new profit opportunities in downtown real estate. According to *Business Week*, "In almost every major city, and many smaller ones, developers, bankrolled by insurance companies, pension funds and foreign investors—particularly Canadian and English—are



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putting their money on the line with important new projects." One insurance executive at the Equitable Life Assurance Society believes that "right now the hottest investment market is Manhattan. It is going to have a chronic office shortage."

But the boom is not limited to Manhattan. During 1979, the total value of contracts for new office construction nationwide reached an estimated $10.2 billion, up from $3.9 billion in 1975. New construction in Minneapolis will expand office space by 50 percent. Construction projects in downtown Chicago have an estimated value of $1 billion and will add nine million square feet to the current supply of sixty million square feet. Important new developments are also scheduled for Detroit (to complement Henry Ford's Renaissance Center), Pittsburgh, Philadelphia and Baltimore.

While there is little doubt that skyscrapers and luxury apartments will "gentrify" these headquarter cities—attract the affluent to live and work in them—there will still be a need for people to do the clerical, service and blue-collar jobs. The new urban work force will be mainly low-paid service employees and part-time, low-skilled office machine operators, cooks, waitresses and janitors. For many headquarter city employees, gentrification will bring only cosmetic improvements in the city skyline along with limited employment opportunities and financial insecurity.

But this is not all that gentrification entails. As inducements to their potential corporate saviors, city governments offer lower taxes, social service cutbacks, union discipline and financial assistance that sometimes amount to 50 percent of the project costs. Baltimore provides an excellent example of the measures necessary to induce revitalization. In that city, the partnership between the private and public sectors, according to *Business Week*, produced "sharp cuts in the city's work force and payroll and a tight lid on the type of unbridled city spending that drives up taxes and drives out business and the middle class." It also led to a series of unsuccessful strikes by municipal employees. But strikes do not bother the advocates of corporate renaissance. "We've taken strikes before," says Baltimore City Finance Director Charles Benson. "During a sanitation strike, white-collar workers picked up the trash. Two years ago we took a five-day police strike. The leaders were fired." Calls for austerity, however, did not extend to cutting government assistance to downtown business interests. Baltimore is now proceeding with plans for a $210 million retail district revitalization project. The city expects to fund 43 percent of the total cost.

In addition to municipal cutbacks, low-income housing will disappear as working-class neighborhoods are converted into more profitable clusters of offices, town houses and shopping districts for the corporate elite. The poor will be dispossessed and left to fend for themselves. Perhaps they will move to the suburbs, as T.D. Allman suggested in a recent issue of *Harper's*. Maybe they will become urban nomads, keeping one step ahead of the revitalization bulldozers. No one seems to care. The Federal Government's interest is limited to preventing community discontent from fomenting civil unrest. The Department of Housing and Urban Development has recently awarded 200 grants to study the problem—a tactic that guarantees continued inaction. Others are willing to accept displacement as the price for headquarter city revitalization. Blake Fleetwood, writing in a recent issue of *The New York Times Magazine*, declared that "Urban experts and politicians are beginning to understand that only the middle and upper classes—not the poor—can rebuild the cities." Thus, as far as the poor in the headquarter cities are concerned, only their sacrifices, not their needs, are on the agenda.

However, not all cities are destined to become global or even regional headquarters. Factory cities such as Jersey City, Youngstown and Toledo have always been blue-collar towns with a militant, unionized labor force. According to many businessmen, labor's demands in these cities have reduced corporate profitability and literally driven capital out of town. Consequently, revitalization policies in the factory cities are also predicated upon calls for austerity. The object is to transform this recalcitrant, high-cost labor supply into a quiescent pool of low-paid workers. This requires new concessions from labor unions and municipal subsidies for the start-up costs of new factories.

To enhance their bargaining power over labor, many corporations establish branch plants in the nonunion, right-to-work Sunbelt. In the rubber industry, for example, less than half the domestic tire production is under union jurisdiction. As a result, strikes in union areas are an increasingly perilous tactic since corporations can offset a drop in production by temporarily raising output in their nonunion facilities. In addition, the mere threat of relocation is sufficient to dampen union enthusiasm for costly benefits. After all, unions will have little bargaining power if they have no one to bargain with.

Unemployment benefits for strikers and aid to families with dependent children will also be cut as part of a package to attract capital back to factory cities. Unemployment benefits, according to a corporation's brief in a case recently before the U.S. Supreme Court, are detrimental because they place governments unfairly on the side of unions, thus encouraging longer and more frequent strikes. Similarly, they argue that lenient welfare eligibility rules impede revitalization by reducing the incentives of the poor to accept any job they are offered.

Once the corporations reduce the threat of strikes and worker militancy, they will then be free to increase labor productivity by using computers and robots to automate their factories and displace high-cost labor. General Motors already has 150 robots on its assembly lines and plans to introduce them in an additional 330 job classifications. At Ford, robot utilization is growing by 50 percent a year. While the economic incentives for automation are irresistible in mass-production industries, for labor the competitive side effects are devastating. Robert T. Lund, a senior research associate at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Center for Policy Alternatives, has predicted "a substantial permanent sector of unemployment" because of automation. Moreover, he suggests that robotized plants

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will further stratify workers into high- and low-skill groups and eliminate any remaining chances of upward mobility.

Corporate demands for concessions in the factory cities will not stop at the shop floor. Before corporations decide either to remain in these cities or to establish new production facilities there, local governments must bow to demands for additional incentives to pay for land acquisition, factory construction and employee-training programs.

This pressure by corporations has already forced the desired concessions in several instances. To attract Volkswagen to Pennsylvania, for example, then-Governor Milton Shapp agreed to pay 80 percent of the $250 million start-up cost. The Pennsylvania Industrial Development Authority, despite the fact that it has never made a loan exceeding $5 million, agreed to spend $40 million to help cash-rich Volkswagen purchase its proposed assembly plant from Chrysler. Although Volkswagen will eventually repay the development authority, interest for the first twenty years of the loan will be only 1.75 percent. Not surprisingly, *Business Week* reports, Pennsylvania may have given away more to Volkswagen than it will ever receive in tax revenues.

Thus, the clamor for urban renaissance has started a bidding war in the factory cities to see which jurisdiction can offer the corporations the greatest subsidies and cheapest labor. (See Ralph Nader and Jerry Jacobs, "The Subsidy Snowball," *The Nation*, October 6, 1979.) Wherever big money ultimately settles, there will likely be austerity for the working class, cutbacks in social services to compensate for the expense of corporate subsidies and, of course, increased profits for the corporations.

Many economists have said that the "rise of the Sunbelt" represents a pattern of convergence in which the poorer, less productive urban centers located in the Southern rim catch up with the level of development in the rest of the United States. Unfortunately, as urban renaissance unfolds in the Northeastern headquarter and factory cities, we will see that there is another, less commonly discussed aspect of convergence: these revitalized cities will start to resemble the right-to-work, cheap-labor, low-benefit cities of the South and Southwest.

In effect, the rhetoric of renaissance and gentrification places all cities, Sunbelt and Frostbelt, factory and headquarter, healthy and declining, on one common auction block, where they will be sold to the lowest corporate bidder, who will receive in return the full panoply of austerity programs already discussed. All the corporate bidder demands is that the urban renaissance enhance the profitability of operations in the revitalized city.

But while renaissance and gentrification will increase profits for business, others will experience increased scarcity. Workers will have less job security and fewer collective bargaining rights. Voters will have less control over citywide and neighborhood resources, fewer public services and fewer guarantees of governmental accountability. City politicians will experience deprivation in the form of less autonomy from the private sector and less ability to tax and regulate business.

For years, political theorists have warned that too much democracy would lead to government interference with private enterprise. But urban renaissance means increased corporate intrusion into the democratic institutions of municipal government. If Rohatyn and his allies have their way, the politics of austerity will create a more ominous form of scarcity—a scarcity of democracy.

Fortunately, there are alternatives to the corporate version of urban renaissance that involve more, not less, democratic control over public and private resources:

§ Neighborhood residents can demand that Federal programs subsidize the construction of low-income housing, provide funds for home improvements and guarantee decent, affordable shelter for those whose homes are torn down.

§ City governments can undercut the power of private capital by using tax-free municipal bonds to provide the urban working class with low-interest mortgages and small-business loans.

§ Unions can fight economic austerity by organizing workers throughout the nation and demanding restrictions on the ability of corporations to relocate in low-wage regions.

§ By removing their $500 billion in pension assets from the trust departments of commercial banks and investing their money themselves, unions can obtain increased control over private investment decisions, provide their members with low-interest mortgages and insure that their pension assets do not finance runaway shops.

§ Voters can use their electoral strength to stop unnecessary corporate subsidies and to demand that city funds be utilized to provide services to those who need them most.

The current residents of central cities must use their democratic rights and economic resources to insure that, as the cities are rebuilt, public and private institutions do not sacrifice the needs of the working class on the altar of increased corporate profitability. Otherwise we will enter an era of political and economic scarcity as the cities we live in are sold right out from under our feet. □

CHEMICAL ADDITIVES

California Fights Toxic Wastes

HAL RUBIN

A recurrent theme in the mystery novels of Ross Macdonald, who writes of affluent Californians in and around a city much like his own Santa Barbara, is the long-buried secret that re-emerges to haunt the present. Now, as though following a Macdonald plot, the carelessly buried chemical wastes of thirty

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years have become a matter of serious public concern in California. Although the state took an early lead in efforts to control the poisonous stream, it faces some special problems. Dangerous wastes are not generated solely by heavy industry. Agricultural pesticides, petrochemicals and oilfield effluents are also major pollutants; California leads the nation in agriculture and is a major producer of oil and of synthetics derived from petroleum.

A recent Congressional report warned that "the hazardous waste disposal problem may well be the single most significant environmental health issue of the decade." In the first national study of waste disposal sites, the survey identified 177 sites in California—a number surpassed only by those in Texas (319), Ohio (253) and New Jersey (223). In all, the survey said, fifty-three of the nation's biggest chemical companies, comprising about 40 percent of the industry, have dumped 762 million tons of potentially hazardous wastes at 3,383 sites since 1950.

The dimensions of the problem are enormous. American industry produces or uses about 60,000 to 70,000 chemical compounds, and several hundred new ones are added annually. In California alone, the hazardous wastes or production byproducts that need to be disposed of total 5 million tons annually. They come mainly from the refining, processing or manufacturing of petroleum products, metals, chemicals, textiles and leather. The industries of the state use or create 22,000 different hazardous substances, mainly in the form of acids, caustics, solvents, pesticides, corrosives and reactive materials. These substances are part of a tide of toxics and hazardous wastes that are finding their way into California's air, water and food—sometimes owing to accidents but often to willful negligence. Despite the magnitude of the problem, California has progressed considerably beyond most states and the Federal Government in attempting to deal with the problem. Its toxic-waste controls have served as models for many other states, as well as the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act. California has led the way in setting standards for worker protection, transportation of wastes and establishment of occupational health centers for training toxicologists, epidemiologists, nurses and industrial hygienists. Nevertheless, the incidents of contamination that continue to occur testify that even California's relatively enlightened codes have shortcomings or breakdowns in enforcement. A number of recent cases of chemical pollution illustrate how serious and widespread the problem is in the state:

§ The state's Department of Health Services found DBCP in 193 of 527 ground-water samples taken from twenty-four California counties. DBCP (dibromochloropropane) is a pesticide used to destroy nematodes that attack a variety of crops. It was banned after tests showed it caused sterility in humans; it is also a suspected carcinogen. Pollution of ground water is always serious because cleanup is virtually impossible.

§ The state charged Aerojet-General Corporation, an aerospace and chemical firm near Sacramento, with willfully or negligently polluting the underlying ground-water system by dumping hazardous chemicals into storage ponds on its property. At least five toxic chemicals used in large amounts to process rocket fuel or to degrease rocket cases have been detected in water samples taken from nearby community wells and surface water.

§ At Riverside in Southern California, the Stringfellow Quarry Corporation was a legal depository for industrial wastes for seventeen years until it was closed down in 1972. The depository is responsible for contaminating local ground water and downstream water supplies with acids and caustics and air pollution.

§ Two truck drivers and twenty-four California highway patrolmen, firemen and highway maintenance men were hospitalized after being exposed to Telon II, an agricultural pesticide that was spilled during a highway accident. Telon II attacks the central nervous system and the cardiovascular system.

§ At Lathrop in the San Joaquin Valley, twenty-four men working for Occidental Chemicals became sterile after exposure to DBCP, and surrounding wells were found to be contaminated with the chemical. At the Occidental plant near Stockton, underground water has been contaminated with a variety of dangerous chemicals. Occidental Petroleum Corporation is the parent company of both Occidental Chemicals and Hooker Chemicals and Plastics. The underground disposal sites of Hooker Chemicals at Love Canal in New York State began leaking poison in 1976, necessitating the evacuation of hundreds of families who had been suffering from strange ailments. Another Hooker plant in Montague, Michigan, leaked a half-ton of poisonous chemicals each day for years into the state's waterways. After being sued by the state, Hooker agreed to do a $26 million cleanup job.

Still other incidents show the ripple effect of contamination. Last June, about 200 gallons of PCB leaked from an electrical transformer in Montana. The resulting problems spread through seventeen states, including California. The PCB had contaminated a plant where hogs are slaughtered and animal feed is packaged. Feed from there was eaten by chickens and hogs all over the West, particularly in the Rocky Mountain area. In Idaho more than 400,000 chickens and millions of eggs had to be destroyed. PCB-contaminated chicken went into canned soups, and contaminated eggs were used in frozen pastries. Fortunately, the products were found and destroyed before they were given nationwide distribution. PCB (polychlorinated biphenyl) is such a toxic and persistent chemical that the U.S. Government maintains eight approved disposal sites for the material.

Although toxic contamination is a widespread and obvi-

AGAINST THE DRAFT?

The Nation will assist student groups and others planning public forums on draft registration by arranging for speakers and making available at bulk rates reprints of Bertram M. Gross's comprehensive article, "The Drive to Revive the Draft" (10 copies, $5; 50 copies, $20; 100 copies, $30; 500 copies, $100). Write Neil Barsky at *The Nation*.

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ous hazard, finding legal remedies to stop it is not so simple. For one thing, it is almost impossible to distinguish between willful negligence and human error. Courts are also reluctant to hold polluters liable for conditions that existed before environmental laws were written or before chemical dangers were understood. The hazardousness of many chemicals is not discovered until after the passage of time. The effects of overexposure are often latent and cumulative—lung disease or cancer may not manifest themselves until twenty or thirty years after exposure. As Peter Weiner, Gov. Jerry Brown's adviser on hazardous materials, puts it: "As a society we leaped before we looked. There are something like 63,000 chemicals in commercial use today, many of which never had adequate research to determine their effects on human beings and the environment prior to their introduction in the marketplace. We realized late that we had a tremendous problem on our hands as a society and as a species, because no country in the world has dealt adequately with these problems."

Because of the all-pervasive nature of chemical use in industry and agriculture, controls can have a considerable economic impact. The use, especially of synthetic organic chemicals, has gone up hundredsfold since World War II, when they were first introduced. Entire new industries in plastics, synthetic rubbers and textiles have emerged since the 1950s. Because of the enormous economic stakes in their use and because their dangers aren't always understood, new chemicals are often in wide use before they are adequately tested. "In our society," Weiner observes, "chemicals seem to have civil rights. They are innocent until proven guilty."

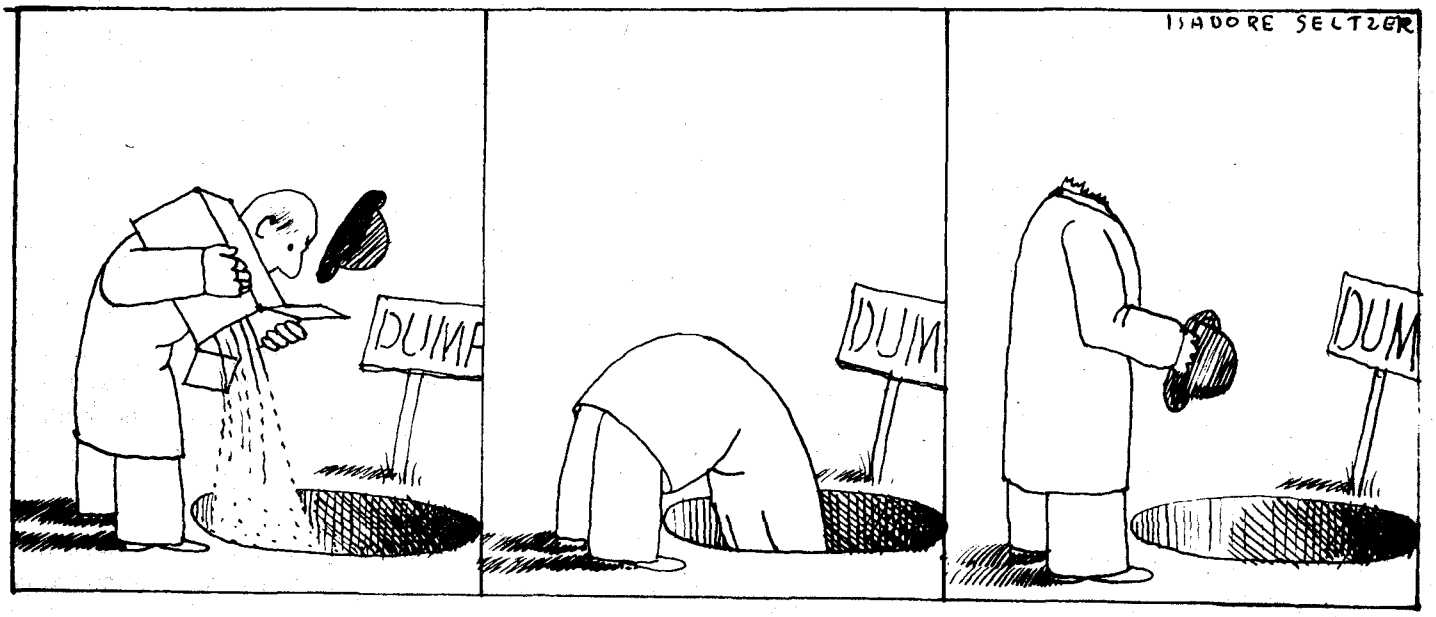
Weiner believes the enormous costs of researching the potential dangers of new chemicals should be borne by the companies, not the government, and that the cost of the product should reflect the cost of the testing necessary to prove its safety. Regulatory agencies lack the legal tools necessary to overcome the resistance of industry and agriculture to what they view as bureaucratic interference. State efforts to plug legal loopholes are handicapped because industry is often reluctant to share information about hazardous substances with the government and its workers. For example, some industries have withheld information about old dumping grounds and their contents, claiming trade secrets would be involved. Actually, they fear possible criminal and civil suits.

Alternatives to dumping of toxic wastes need to be found. Robert Judd, director of the Governor's Office of Appropriate Technology, sums up the views of those who are wrestling with the problem in California. "Our best investment will be in approaches that seek alternatives to landfill, while we reduce the use of and recycle the poisons that society generates but which our natural support system cannot assimilate."

Among the alternative technologies being considered are recycling of wastes, incineration and a resources recovery facility. Two promising types of incineration are being investigated by Rockwell International in Southern California. The molten salt technique is being tested with laboratory scale units. Combustion occurs under a pool of molten salt, which neutralizes toxic materials such as arsenic, lead, dioxin and polychlorinated biphenyls. Apparently there is essentially no limit to the hazardous materials that can be neutralized by this method.

Rockwell's coal gasification unit burns up organic materials, neutralizes the toxicity of the noncombustibles and significantly reduces the volume of what remains so that disposal is simplified. The unit can handle one ton a day, which is considered a commercially acceptable capability. But such alternatives to landfill disposal will come into use only after the Federal Government has altered present regulations so as to make it cheaper to destroy hazardous materials than to bury them.

Another possible solution is a resource-recovery facility, which will convert waste acids into agricultural chemicals; recover metals, metal salts and acids from waste acids, and extract reusable solvents from waste solvents. Still another technique is waste exchange or waste transfer. This method takes a byproduct that has no use to the business that pro-



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duced it and trades or sells it to some other industry that can utilize it (an example would be the transfer of discarded laboratory-grade chemicals to another company that can use chemicals of lesser quality). Services such as these now exist in California and Oregon through private businesses, associations and government agencies.

Hazardous chemicals in transit are a special headache. California is working on better identification of chemical cargoes and developing training methods and specialized equipment for police and firemen, who are called upon to handle the 700 chemical spills and fires that occur every year in the state. The Brown administration has set up a central clearinghouse to find, analyze and store computerized information about toxic substances and chemicals. Until now, the data were scattered and fragmentary.

In 1978 an Occupational Health Hazard Information and Alert System was established. Its first priority is to identify extremely hazardous substances that have thus far escaped detection. The State Department of Health has a partially complete listing that already includes 791 dangerous chemicals. The alerting system is intended to prevent accidents like the DBCP experience. (In 1961 laboratory studies by Dow Chemical Company and Shell Oil indicated the danger of DBCP, but the pesticide was not banned until 1977.)

California has enacted a variety of controls—the Hazardous Waste Control Act of 1972, and a law that was passed in 1977 to prevent clandestine and illegal dumping of toxic chemicals. The latter statute added civil and criminal penalties for violations of the law or regulations—amounting to $25,000 for each civil violation and $25,000 or one year in prison, or both, for each criminal violation. Another control was established in 1972, when the State Water Control Board adopted minimum standards for waste disposal on land and established a statewide disposal site and waste classification system. A key control in the elaborate toxic-tracking system is the use of manifests, or lists, for all toxic wastes transported on public roads.

Obviously, if all of California's codes, laws and regulations were obeyed, the state would have fewer environmental problems. Negligence, willful and otherwise, is responsible for much of the chemical pollution. Illegal dumping is quick, easy and inexpensive. Bootleg dumping evades the costs of legal disposal, which can run from $5 to $50 a drum, depending on the location of the site, type of material and quantity. Toxics can be flushed down a sewer or put in barrels and abandoned along railroad tracks and isolated highways. The Department of Health Services is using "chemical cops" to prevent dumping, and ten cases are pending under the civil and criminal penalties authorized recently.

California has a toxics problem that many other states do not face. More than 300 million pounds of pesticides were used on crops in the state in 1979. Yet research into the effects of long-term exposure to or consumption of food treated with chemical poisons is limited. Before DBCP was banned, the Environmental Protection Agency reported finding residues of the chemical in vegetables and peanuts. Every year more than 1,000 farm workers and pilots who fly crop-dusting planes are made ill by pesticides. Wells all over the state have been polluted by agricultural chemicals. Currently, the legislature is grappling with a pesticide control policy that may end up in the courts because neither the environmentalists nor the agribusiness bloc are happy with the proposed reforms.

And the pesticide debate is only one segment of the continuing conflict over the regulation of hazardous chemicals and wastes that have found their way into the air we breathe, the water we drink and the food we eat. Former California State Senator John Dunlap, who sponsored the 1972 toxics control bill, said that industry minimizes environmental concerns by asserting that risk is inevitable in any technological progress. He concedes that society can't advance without elements of risk. "But somewhere along the line," Dunlap adds, "the decisions as to the risks we do and don't take as a society must be a shared decision." □

The British Way of Libel

CLANCY SIGAL

London

The Jeremy Thorpe "Trial of the Century" fiasco revealed, among other things, how easy it is for an unscrupulous British politician to suppress facts unfavorable to him simply by threatening to sue nosy reporters for libel.

When hapless, neurotic Norman Scott, Thorpe's alleged former lover, kept making a nuisance of himself in the early 1970s by telling police, newspapers and various magistrates how badly the Liberal Party leader had used him, Thorpe smoothly throttled hints of this appearing in the press by adroit manipulation of a draconian libel law aptly dubbed "the crooks' charter." Indeed, had *Private Eye*, the political-scandal weekly, not so persistently muckraked Thorpe's hypocrisy (in public he attacked as "indecent" the homosexuality he practiced in private), despite a storm of writs by Thorpe's expensive lawyers, the recent prosecution never would have occurred. Thorpe and his co-accused, indicted for conspiring to hire a "hit man" to murder Scott on a lonely moor, got off only because the Director of Public Prosecutions bungled the indictment and the judge more or less told the baffled jury to bring in a not-guilty verdict.

For a while we all had a marvelous laugh out of the case. The comic ineptitude of the would-be murderer, the airline pilot Andrew Newton, in shooting Scott's dog but missing the intended victim, summed up for cynics the total incompetence of the present British political scene. But Thorpe's seedy maneuvers to "fix the record" and to protect himself against damaging publicity by invoking libel underscored one of the most unpleasant and insidious features of public

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life in England.

Because Britain has no written Constitution, no Bill of Rights and nothing even remotely comparable to the Freedom of Information Act, writers and journalists operate under handicaps which their American colleagues would find intolerable. Under British law, Watergate never would have got out. The first articles by Woodward and Bernstein in *The Washington Post* were full of inaccuracies and if they had appeared in Britain, an injunction to repress further publication could easily have been obtained. It happens all the time here—most recently when British Leyland, merely by a mild legal threat, scared BBC Television into withholding the repeat of a program on automobile defects. Not only are journalists sued thirteen to the dozen almost every day but books are constantly withdrawn under lawyers' intimidation. In too many instances the effect (and intent) is political censorship.

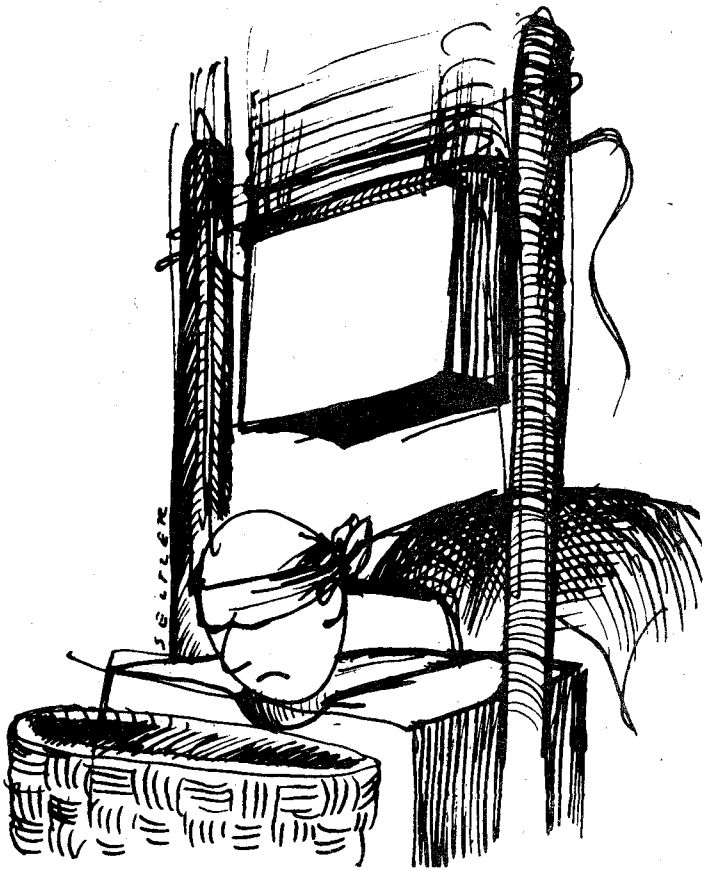
Recent examples include the banning of American journalist Andrew Roth's biography of Harold Wilson titled *Yorkshire Walter Mitty.* (The former Labor Prime Minister issues defamation writs with almost clockwork regularity—just as Winston Churchill had on permanent call a battery of lawyers trained to pounce on about-to-be-published books that included uncomplimentary references to "good old Winnie.") Two Cabinet ministers in the Callaghan Government forced the withdrawal of *No Shining Armour*, a blistering—and much-needed—exposé of Labor Party corruption in the industrial northeast, which had been written by a former Labor Member of Parliament, Eddie Milne. And a book by Richard Deacon, a *Sunday Times* journalist, about Communist infiltration in high Government places and university High Tables, was pulled from circulation when a Cambridge don sued.

The law of civil libel, a mine field of nuance, is only part of the legal apparatus of restraint and secrecy which structurally inhibits any discussion of serious issues in England. The ludicrously severe Official Secrets Act makes it an indictable offense to publish even the number of cups of tea consumed by workers in any Government department. (The former Central Intelligence agent Philip Agee and U.S. journalist Mark Hosenball were summarily deported under Section 2 of this act, without trial, without opportunity to face their accusers or know the specific charges against them.) The criminal libel law, gathering dust for half a century, was suddenly rescued from obscurity by Sir James Goldsmith, the archreactionary food tycoon with manic ambitions of building his own press empire, and directed against *Private Eye*. Goldsmith almost caused the magazine (and its printers) to shut down. And the law of contempt is so stringently worded that it is virtually impossible to do serious investigative reporting here. Even such a powerful newspaper as *The Sunday Times* was for years prevented from publishing a well-researched probe of the thalidomide scandal by the Distillers Corporation's claim that the matter was chronically sub judice.

In practice, libel is used more often than any other law to gag writers and to demand "money with menaces" from them in the courts. Almost every day English newspapers are sprinkled with reports of libel actions. These are only the tip of an iceberg. For every writ that finally is heard in the High Court, there are dozens settled privately. A species of plaintiff known to lawyers as "libel vultures" issues writs, on the principle of "why not?," purely for nuisance value. Unlike France, where you are liable for your own costs in a civil action, win or lose, in Britain awards against defendants in libel actions include legal costs of both parties. If Oscar Wilde had sued Lord Queensberry in the current writ-happy atmosphere, he would have won hands down. Even trade unionists and radical journalists have become infected by the upper-class tradition that insists that if you do not respond to a public slur with a writ then you are implicitly agreeing to the slander.

Increasingly, the instinct of the English establishment—left, right and center—is to squash opposition with a libel writ. The left is as guilty of this as are the conservatives. Some years ago Nye Bevan, Richard Crossman and the Labor Party general secretary, Morgan Phillips, sued the independent Tory magazine, *Spectator*—next to *Private Eye* a favorite target of writ-bashers—for suggesting they were drunk at a political conference in Italy. Crossman later impishly admitted in private the truth of the allegation, but the *Spectator*, of course, lost. More recently, the "socialist" trade union chief, Clive Jenkins, successfully sued a Trotskyist newspaper for satirizing his union. Labor politicians, union bosses and even journalists rank near top-of-the-league in suing (often one another) for libel.

Sometimes, in the fastness of the night, I laugh myself to sleep (with tears in my eyes) by reading through my thick file of libel case reports. Newspaper editors, who staunchly de-



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fend their right to criticize others, promptly sue *Private Eye* when it prints uncomplimentary remarks about them. A fashion model sues *Vanity Fair* for implying she has pimples. Dame Rebecca West sues the *Spectator* over a bad book review. Twenty-six Members of Parliament of all parties sue *The Daily Mail* for printing their poor attendance records—and all win substantial damages as well as groveling apologies. "Mr. Teasy Weasy," a hairdresser, sues a newspaper for suggesting he is losing his grip on women's coiffures.

Cases that would be laughed out of court in other countries are won by aggrieved plaintiffs on a nod and wink in England. Indeed, the existence here of a libel industry acts as a welcoming beacon to greedy or thin-skinned touring show folk. Among those who have queued up to pluck the English libel law are Telly Savalas and Julie Andrews; the latter was deeply wounded by an article alleging a Palladium personal appearance had been less than successful. Especially these days, when there is a kind of confused populist hatred of newspapers and television, libel defendants, particularly journalists, almost always lose in English courts. (Because Scotland's law of defamation is different, awards of more than nominal damages for libel are practically unknown north of the border. Thus, hardly anyone bothers to threaten or commence libel.) Juries persistently vote for the plaintiff. And the kicker is that the high damages awarded by English judges are entirely tax-free.

Although in English law the dead cannot be libeled, a ferociously vocal Labor M.P., Andrew Faulds, has successfully sued the estate of Richard Crossman because Faulds —famous for his stinging broadsides against his opponents in Parliament, where debates are privileged—had allegedly been insulted in Crossman's posthumously published memoirs. It is amusing how often the worst bullyboys of English politics suddenly go as sensitive as Victorian debutantes once they perceive the possibility of cash to restore their sullied honor.

Historically, the libel law is rooted in the mists of English religious canon. In the Middle Ages it was used to protect the exploiting priesthood from insults (popular discontent). Today it is used by all sections of the ruling elite to block any direct attack on it. Non-Britons who admire the English writer's habitual resort to elegant metaphor, subtle allusion and dry innuendo might consider that those who live here are often forced into Aesopian literary techniques because, consciously or not, we know the penalties of blunt speech.

And yet journalists, who are among the chief victims of libel, are also its most complacent defenders. Once, when I asked the editor of a national Fleet Street newspaper if he would participate in a campaign to relax the law, he responded coolly: "Why should I? Jolly good thing libel. Protects the average man in the street against big papers like mine invading their privacy. Also keeps my reporters on their toes. Against inaccuracy or seeing too many Watergates in the woodpile." Precisely. Fleet Street editors, long accustomed to a wretched tradition of low-level scandalmongering as a substitute for real news gathering, can easily live with the present restrictive libel law. The pernicious thing is the way in which independent-minded writers learn to internalize fear of libel in their work. Even radical journalists take the law for granted—that is, when they do not positively take advantage of it. The only journalist who systematically derides the libel law is the *Spectator*'s Auberon Waugh, ironically, a crusty right-winger.

Book publishers and authors suffer, if anything, even more from libel writs and threats. Fortunately, most actions against newspapers and magazines are ex post facto; the "libelous" statement has already appeared. What frequently happens with books is that a sharp-eyed lawyer or hungry client gets wind of a review copy and actually prevents publication. Or the author and his or her publisher must submit to blackmail to get the book out. A fairly classic example occurred a couple of years ago when a well-known, reputable novelist inadvertently created a fictional character with the same name as an obscure lord. Realizing his error while the book was still at the printer's, the novelist immediately did the honorable thing and, accompanied by his publisher (from whom I heard the story), went to the country gentleman, apologized for his honest mistake and promised to change the name in subsequent editions. "Tut tut, my boy," graciously smiled the lord, "think no further about it. I perfectly understand. My lawyer will call on your lawyer—as it happens my aged sister is coming to live with me and we need a little extra money to build an addition to the house for her, and this little contretemps among friends is just the ticket. Nothing personal." The author was sued and had to pay up, as well as seeing the first press run of his book pulped. (The lord also sued a magazine which had already appeared with an extract.)

Such horror tales abound. Another author has had a novel about his childhood—written more than two decades ago—permanently proscribed in Britain because his mother, an illustrious literary name garlanded with royal honors, threatens to sue him. A British political journalist has had to seek refuge in the United States because he said something nasty on TV about a titled literary lady, who sued and won. Rather than face bankruptcy, he absconded and can return to Britain only when he pays up the principal plus interest charges—in effect, never.

My own novel, *Zone of the Interior*, published without problems in the United States, is also banned because British lawyers have advised firms wanting to publish it that the book is not a "safe business risk" for libel insurance. Two small left-wing houses expressed interest but backed off when libel was mentioned. When I suggested to one of these publishers, a Marxist, that we consider making a principled fight on the issue of censorship-by-libel, he smiled wearily: "A single High Court action could wreck us. And anyway libel isn't a political issue."

Until journalists, authors and book publishers raise their consciousness about the deadly effects of the English libel law, it will continue to cloud an already obscurantist atmosphere. Considering the gravity of Britain's deepening economic and political crises, more rather than less light needs to be shed on public issues. □

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BOOKS & THE ARTS.

Television News Narcosis

NEIL POSTMAN

In the quest to understand the effects of media, it is always useful to regard the names of media formats with circumspection. What are called newspapers, for example, do not consist mostly of news, adult movies appear to be puerile fantasies, and talk radio features a succession of thirty-second temper tantrums. Of course, the media will use such words as fit their fancy, but we are not required on that account to allow *their* words to become *ours*.

But sometimes a medium's format will be aptly named by its masters, even if unconsciously. And then we may not only take them at their word but we may also use their word as an entry point for analysis. I refer here in particular to what is called on television a news show. A show implies an entertainment, a world of artifice and fantasy carefully staged to produce a particular series of effects so that the audience is left laughing or crying or stupefied. This is exactly the business of a news show, and it is puffery to claim, as producers do when they accept their Emmy Awards, that the purpose of such shows is to make the public knowledgeable.

In the first place, events of serious and urgent public interest such as the taking of hostages in Iran are already known by the audience, through radio, newspapers, TV bulletins and word of mouth, before the audience settles in for its evening show. In the second place, whatever else one may say for or against TV news shows, it is clear that the audience can do practically nothing about the things it is shown or told. If knowledge is power, if the function of information is to modify or provide direction to action, then it is almost precisely true that TV news shows give nearly no information and even less knowledge. Except of course through their commercials. One can be told about Bounty, Braniff and Burger King, and then do something in relation to them.

Neil Postman's most recent book is Teaching as a Conserving Activity *(Delacorte). He teaches in the Media Ecology Program at New York University.*

But beyond this, there is in fact very little that the public comes "to know" from these shows, if "to know" implies, at the very least, to remember. Inquiries into what people remember about the "news" as depicted on TV consistently reveal that they remember almost nothing. Sometimes this is so after a mere thirty minutes have elapsed from the show's end. In some instances, people forget the "news" they have been shown or told while the show is still in progress.

This is not a case of stupidity. Everything on a TV news show is arranged so that it is unnecessary, undesirable and, in any event, very difficult to attend to the sense of what is depicted. After all, if it is commonplace for people to eat a chicken sandwich while watching a mother collapsing from grief over a dead child, in what sense can we say that news shows make people knowledgeable?

To understand what manner of thing a TV news show is—that is, any of the late news shows as seen in New York, Chicago or San Francisco—we must look carefully at its structure. For example, all such shows begin and end with music; there is also music at every break for a commercial. What is its purpose? The same as in a theater or film: to excite the emotions of the audience, to create tension, to build expectations. But there is an important functional difference between, say, film music and TV news music in that in a film the music is varied according to the particular emotion the content calls for. There is frightening music, happy music, romantic music and the like. On TV news shows, the same music is played whether the lead story is the invasion of Afghanistan or the adoption of a municipal budget or a Super Bowl victory. By using the same music each night, in the same spots, as an accompaniment to a *different* set of events, TV news shows contribute toward the development of their leitmotif: that there are no important differences between one day and another, that the same emotions that were called for yesterday are called for today, and that in any case the events of the day are meaningless.

This theme is developed through diverse means, including beauty, tempo and discontinuity. Of beauty not much needs to be said beyond observing that TV news readers are almost all young and attractive—perhaps the handsomest class of people in America. Television, naturally enough, is biased toward compelling visual imagery, and in almost all cases the charms of a human face take precedence over the capabilities of a human voice. It is not essential that a TV news reader grasp the meaning of what is being reported; many of them cannot even produce an appropriate facial display to go along with the words they are speaking. And some have even given up trying. What is essential is that the audience like looking at their faces. To put it bluntly, as far as TV is concerned, in the entire United States there is not one 60-year-old woman capable of being a news reader. Audiences, it would appear, are not captivated by their faces. It is the teller, not what is told, that matters here.

It is also believed that audiences are captivated by variety and repelled by complexity, which is why, during a typical thirty-minute show, there will be between fifteen and twenty "stories." Discounting time for commercials, promos for stories to come, and news readers' banter, this works out to an average of sixty seconds a story. On a recent CBS show (February 4, 11:00 P.M.), it went like this: 264 seconds for a story about bribery of public officials; thirty-seven seconds for a related story about Senator Larry Pressler; forty seconds about Iran; twenty-two seconds about Aeroflot; twenty-eight seconds about a massacre in Afghanistan; twenty-five seconds about Muhammad Ali; fifty-three seconds about a New Mexico prison rebellion; 160 seconds about protests against the film *Cruising*; eighteen seconds about the owners of Studio 54; eighteen seconds about Suzanne Somers; sixteen seconds about the Rockettes; 174 seconds for an "in-depth" study of depression (Part I); twenty-two seconds about Lake Placid; 166 seconds for the St. John's-Louisville basketball game; 120 seconds for the weather; 100 seconds for a film review.

This way of defining the "news" achieves two interesting effects. First, it makes it difficult to think about an event, and second, it makes it difficult to feel about an event. By thinking, I

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mean having the time and motivation to ask oneself: What is the meaning of such an event? What is its history? What are the reasons for it? How does it fit into what I know about the world? By feeling, I mean the normal human responses to murder, rape, fire, bribery and general mayhem. During a recent survey I conducted, I was able to identify only one story to which audiences responded with a recollectable feeling of disgust or horror: the burning to death of a "demon-possessed" baby by its mother. I believe there is some significance in the fact that news shows will frequently include thirty to forty-five seconds of "feeling" responses by "the man and woman in the street," as if to remind the audience that it is *supposed* to feel something about a particular story. I take this to be an expression of guilt on the part of producers who know full well that their shows leave little room for such reaction. On the February 4 CBS show, no reactions were asked for about the massacre in Afghanistan or the New Mexico prison riot. However, thirty-five seconds were given over to "on the street" reactions to bribery charges against Senator Harrison Williams of New Jersey. The people allowed to comment said they felt terrible.

The point is, of course, that all events on TV come completely devoid of historical continuity or any other context, and in such fragmented and rapid succession that they wash over our minds in an undifferentiated stream. This is television as narcosis, dulling to both sense and sensibility. To be sure, the music, the promos ("Coming up next, a riot in a New Mexico prison . . .") and the news readers' interactions ("What's happening in New Jersey, Jane?") create an air of excitement, of tension to be resolved. But it is entirely ersatz, for what is presented is so compressed and hurried—another story always fidgeting offstage, half mad with anxiety to do its thirty-seven seconds—that one can scarcely retain in one's mind the connection between the promise of excitement and its resolution; that is to say, the excitement of a TV news show is largely a function of tempo, not substance. It is excitement about the movement of information, not its meaning.

But if it is difficult to think and feel about the news, this must not be taken to mean that the audience is not expected to have a feeling, or at least an attitude, about the world. That attitude, as I have said, is that all events, having no precedent causes or subsequent consequences, are without value and therefore meaningless. It must be kept in mind here that TV news shows are terrifyingly surrealistic, discontinuous to the point where almost nothing has anything to do with anything else. What, for example, is the connection between Aeroflot and Suzanne Somers? Between Studio 54 and Iran? Between *Cruising* and a massacre in Afghanistan? Bribed officials and the Rockettes? Will any of these stories be followed up? Were they there yesterday? Why is Iran worth forty seconds and the St. John's game 120? How is it determined that Suzanne Somers should get less time than Muhammad Ali? And what in the end is the relationship of the commercials to the other stories? There were, on the February 4 show, twenty-one commercials, occupying close to ten minutes. Three commercials preceded the bribery story, four commercials preceded the New Mexico prison riot, three preceded the special report (Part I) on depression. As you can well imagine, the commercials were cheerful, filled with the promise of satisfaction, security and, in two cases, erotic pleasure.

Given such juxtapositions, what is a person to make of the world? How is one to measure the importance of events? What principles of human conduct are displayed, and according to what scheme of moral order are they valued? To any such questions, the TV news show has this invariable reply: There is no sense of proportion to be discerned in the world. Events are entirely idiosyncratic; history is irrelevant; there is no rational basis for valuing one thing over another.

Indeed, one cannot even find in this world-view a sense of contradiction. Otherwise, we would not be shown four commercials celebrating the affluence of America, followed by the despair and degradation of prisoners in a New Mexico jail. One would have expected the news reader at least to wink, but he took no notice of what he was saying.

What it all adds up to is that a TV news show is a form of absurdist literature which nightly instructs us on how we shall see the day. Here is your window on the world, we are told. It will reveal to you the fevered discontinuities of modern times. You need not think much about them, feel much about them, or even remember the details. There is nothing you can do about this. No need to be depressed. Pan Am will fly you to Hawaii for $60 down, the rest to be paid later. □

Cultured Narcissism

ANTHONY ASTRACHAN

STATES OF DESIRE: Travels in Gay America. *By Edmund White. E.P. Dutton. 336 pp. $12.95.*

Edmund White calls this book "gay travel notes," but it is much more than that. Playing Margaret Mead at one moment, Alexis de Tocqueville at another, he provides insights into whole communities as well as their gay segments. Well, not quite whole. White meets few women in his travels, few blue-collar workers, and members of racial minorities only when they have passed a certain point in the channels of upward mobility, often by passing through homosexual as well as economic or educational gateways.

Still, White's descriptions of middle-class America ring true for and about straights as well as gays. His Los Angeles, like mine, is adolescent, narcissistic, bourgeois. It is—beneath its pretense, its immense effort to be laid back—as frantic both to play and to produce as is New York. His Kansas City is what I would expect, its imprisonment in the attitudes and behavior of the 1950s hidden behind the current fads that flutter on the surface. His Mormonland is without question the same country that made Norman Mailer's Gary Gilmore move from acting out sexual fantasies to acting out murders he didn't know he'd fantasized. But Mailer's Mormons don't reveal the "garments" that White's unwrap, the perfect symbol of their repressiveness—a kind of long underwear they don for protection against their own lusts ("women have pelvic examinations without taking them off").

Anthony Astrachan, a senior editor of GEO *magazine, is writing a book on how men feel about the changes women are making.*

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When White zooms in from the general to the gay particular, the close-up reveals scenes that would surprise a straight, middle-class New Yorker but leave no doubt as to their authenticity: a gay cowboy bar in Houston; gay Jews and gay Nazis facing one another or avoiding one another in San Francisco; gay blacks in Atlanta who lead completely bourgeois lives but never communicate with either gay or bourgeois whites in the same city; an American Indian in Santa Fe, a man in his 60s who keeps to tribal tradition and sleeps only with straight men of his village when their wives are absent or angry, preferably men whose many children attest to their virility. This Indian too is middle class; he "lives in a large rambling house, surrounded by books, and sleeps in an old four-poster bed." But White meets younger gay Native Americans who are in a state of total confusion after absorbing Chicano ideas about *machismo* and Anglo ideas about gay liberation.

The one place where White misses the essential reality is Washington, D.C., though he does catch the difficulty of finding anyone in Washington (of either gender or any sexual preference) who can talk about both poetry and politics. But he concentrates so much on gay activist lobbying, a middle-class white effort, that he fails to look at either the vast black majority of D.C. citizens or the subterranean part of the white bureaucratic population in suburbs like Falls Church or Annandale. Both have gay components and both are susceptible to the kind of observation that White does so well.

The combination of the familiar and the newly discovered in White's America makes me wonder how much gays have been assimilated into straight society and how much the straight middle class has adopted gay values outside of sex, or at least gay approaches to arts, manners and styles. White answers the first question but not the second, though the subtext makes me think the answer to the latter is, "More than you think." On the first, he says that the majority of gay men want a lover, a house, a stable life. He allows for exceptions in New York and San Francisco, where he says homosexuals are becoming more idiosyncratic and less assimilated to the general population. But in fact, the middle-class gays he describes in other cities, even with a house and a stable life, desperately fear growing old (past 25? past 35? past 60?), use a lot of drugs and seem dedicated to fulfilling the stereotype about the promiscuity of homosexuals. A white Atlanta architect, for instance, speaks of his home, his Buick, his five employees, his pride in being the man of his family since his father's death and the lover he had for a nine-year span. But he says that for kicks, "I live three blocks from the big local disco. Or I can go to After Dark, the dirty bookshop, get blown and be home in half an hour. I date several guys."

The architect is one of many people in White's book who are avatars of Christopher Lasch's "culture of narcissism." White never mentions Lasch, and early in the book he says he is baffled by the concept of narcissism and its currency. I find this hard to believe, coming from someone who must know John Rechy's confession that in sixty-nining with another man he feels as though he is swallowing his own semen, someone who sees that the sadist and the masochist in truth are appalled by authority. When White says that many gays practice what Paul Valéry called the "delirious professions," which Valéry described as "all those trades whose main tool is one's opinion of oneself, and whose raw material is the opinion others have of you," he is trafficking in Lasch's culture. He gets even closer to Lasch's theme when he talks about the social and psychological consequences of the collapse of values like religion, patriotism and the family, though neither Lasch nor I would agree that the collapse has forced sex "to take up the slack, to become our sole mode of transcendence and our only touchstone of authenticity." Well, Lasch's book never mentions male homosexuals either. Mr. White, meet Christopher Lasch. Mr. Lasch, Edmund White.

I am sorry White's states of desire are populated by so few women. I'd like to know more about something he mentions in passing—his talks with straight women, particularly feminists, about things they have in common with gay men, like "how to maintain one's independence without armoring oneself against love; how to accept role-playing in the bedroom without falling into it in the rest of one's life; . . . how to remain courageous as one drifts farther and farther away from convention." It would be rewarding for gays and feminists to talk to straight men on the same subjects.

I am glad White wrote this book, and wrote it so well. His feel for words, for the English language, is rare among the anthropologists and political scientists of love. □

Jurisprudence For Poets

RONALD B. SHWARTZ

SHORT TAKES. *By Michael Meltsner. Random House. 244 pp. $8.95.*

The hero of Michael Meltsner's pithy first novel is Jeremy, a public service lawyer who suffers a kind of mid-life *Angst*. If cynics are idealists turned sour, then Jeremy can only be described as "curdling"; he is awed by the legal system's promise, but jaded by its Byzantine abuses and skeptical of his own designs on a profession in which he handsomely excels. "The law is simply too vast," he writes, "thinking about its nature and my place in its cosmology empties me of energy, saps my confidence." It is precisely in this fashioning of law as metaphor that Meltsner's existential question looms: How can an intelligent person possibly spend his life in law, when life is short and there is so much else to do?

In search of an answer, Jeremy takes inventory of his life, recounting the past in a series of abrupt vignettes—or "short takes" as he calls them—on everything from death row clients to puberty rites of legal apprenticeship to marital infidelities. In take one, he finds himself defending a burglar whose *modus operandi* is to flirt with Scarsdale domestics and tease out the vacation habits of their employers. ("To Baker it was a living like any other. 'It kept me off the streets,' he said.") In a second take he's a law student who moonlights as an insurance adjuster in the Catskill resorts, an occupation that turns life into a negotiation, a cold-blooded zero-sum game. Takes three and four, et cetera, ramble off to other intriguing sets: his salad days with a

Ronald B. Shwartz is a Boston attorney and a former editor of The University of Chicago Law Review.

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Jewish gang, his ordeal as a witness to the Gary Gilmore execution, his lifelong lover's quarrel with Manhattan, whose chronic agitation mimics his own.

All this jumping around, it seems, is at once the prevailing metaphor of Jeremy's malaise and his only way of curing it. "The riddle," he explains,

> is my search for settled standards, right answers and most of all continuity when all the hearts I know, my own included, are a mess. Here is a plausible explanation: in this city our pace is jagged, our spirit fractious. My feelings come in spasms. We move in the reactive, impersonal manner of blips on the screen of one of those electronic games you plug into a television monitor or play in a bar. Our strip of light goes blip, blip across the field, bangs into another, then blip, blip, blip off in a new direction. Continuity allows us to penetrate the machine, to discover a human purpose in the blips.

Meltsner, who is a lawyer himself, is no amateur stylist. His prose—like Jeremy's life—is galvanized. There's a nice, frantic literacy about it: quick flashes of metaphor and aphorism ("Bad vibes do not constitute reversible error," "Life yearns for fresh eccentricities") and multicolored sentences that break into one another in tiny yet logical jumps, like synapses revved up by caffeine. If the language is sometimes too arch, or too slickly compressed, its overall temper is uncannily suited to Jeremy's restless, disjointed recollections.

For all the subtle charm of these individual "takes," however, the novel doesn't quite equal the sum of its parts. Its only unifying plot is a frail bid at dramatic tension: Jeremy, it appears, is torn between enviable options. A post-Watergate law school, dedicated to grooming public lawyers of conscience, wants him to be dean. Meanwhile, a powerful friend in the White House is urging him to compete for a Federal judgeship. At the same time, he remains committed to a legal-aid clinic named Good Works, whose clients captivate him according to their fictional appeal.

The "tri-lemma" is resolved at the end of Jeremy's far-flung "takes" and apparently because of them—but exactly how is unclear. The resolution is a non sequitur, pulled out of a hat rabbit-style, and the resulting suspicion is that Meltsner's isolated blips of life are a conceit of convenience, a pardonable excuse for a string of cameo works. Which makes the final verdict on *Short Takes* the same as Jeremy's verdict on law: flawed but not dishonorable. It is a jurisprudence for poets, a poetry for jurisprudes and a serious and engaging debut. □

Left Questions

RONALD RADOSH

POWER ON THE LEFT: American Radical Movements Since 1946. *By Lawrence Lader. W.W. Norton and Company. 411 pp. $14.95.*

It is the great strength of Lawrence Lader's *Power on the Left* that he not only addresses the hard questions about the possibility of a solid socialist movement in America but also offers a careful, precise and accurate survey of the American left's confused and often contradictory odyssey from 1946 to the present. Lader's scope is wide, his definition of "left" perhaps too broad. He covers the anti-cold-war progressives in the late 1940s; the demise of the American Communist Party; the civil rights movement and the emergence of black nationalism; the New Left and the 1960s student movement and the women's movement. As he defines it, the left includes *any* movement for "limited objectives," as long as their goals lead to far-reaching changes. They must seek "decisive, lasting social, political and economic change for large numbers of oppressed and disadvantaged people." Ultimately, he adds as an afterthought, they should be directed "toward socialist planning and programs."

Lader begins his book with a study of Vito Marcantonio's campaign organization, for which he served as chief public relations director. Why was Marcantonio the only successful left Congressman between 1944 and 1950? Lader is clear about the reason: He was "a master of coalition politics," and he united neighborhood ethnic groups, fought for his district's needs (East Harlem) and gained the support of socialists and Communists, while he shrewdly used the idea of labor as a third party to "bolster his coalition strategy." Lader shows convincingly that Marcantonio's strength lay in what he accomplished for his immediate constituents who cared little for ideology. But he adds, rather unconvincingly, that Marcantonio was trying to build socialism "in his district in slow, careful stages," moving his constituents into "semi-socialist structures" such as "tenant groups" and ethnic organizations, avoiding the rhetoric of revolution while "willing to stay within the system as long as he could push it constantly to the left."

Lader is both right and wrong. Marcantonio knew that real effectiveness would come from practicing real politics—from eschewing a "revolutionary" line such as that adopted by the New Left in the 1960s, which saw electoral politics per se as bourgeois. Yet he is stretching his point precariously when he describes Marcantonio's politics as socialist, since Marcantonio himself never espoused socialist concepts. If he was a socialist, he was so in the tradition of those Communists who hid their ideology, and believed that socialism would take over the New Deal and

Ronald Radosh, author and historian, is writing a book on the Rosenberg case for Holt, Rinehart and Winston. He is a member of the National Advisory Council of the Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee.

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Democratic Party without anyone's noticing—without the conscious introduction into the political process of socialist ideas and perspectives.

What Lader learned from his experience with Marcantonio is the central theme of his book—the need to maintain a broad coalition with liberals in order not to cut oneself off from the mainstream. Henry Wallace fought a noble fight against the cold war, he points out, but he failed to deal effectively with the risks of a third party Presidential campaign—"isolation from the labor and liberal mainstream." Lader is sympathetic to Wallace's "integrity" and "prophetic accuracy," but he is critical of positions he took that made him appear to be "a clumsy apologist" for the Soviet Union.

Lader is also clear about what might be the major failure of the anti-cold-war left—the failure "to develop a base that concentrated on American needs and was not dominated by Soviet policy"—and he accurately describes the devastating impact of Stalinism on the pro-Communist sectors of the left: "Instead of concentrating on working-class issues, it was consumed by international policy. Instead of meeting the needs of American workers, it worried about the strategic needs of Moscow." Hence the C.I.O. left, led by Communists, allowed itself to be isolated by stressing its own cold-war necessities. And the American Communist Party, always the "slavish echo of the Kremlin," even started its own hunt for heretics at the very moment of the worst McCarthyite repression. The Khrushchev report, he writes, spelled the end of "a dream built on the infallibility of the Soviet Union as the supreme model of what Marxism would create."

Yet rank and filers who were part of this tainted Old Left played an important and little-known role. When the new civil rights movement emerged in the 1950s, it included many veterans from earlier movements with Old Left links. Rosa Parks had studied at the Highlander Folk School two months before she refused to sit in the back of that Montgomery bus, and she had taken part in a training program with a "decided Marxist slant." Her defiance, he says, "was hardly accidental; her political experience . . . made her ideal for the role." And, he writes, "two veteran Marxists would be part of the Rev. Martin Luther King's inner circle during the boycott." Daisy Bates, who led the Little Rock school desegregation struggle, was a Progressive Party member.

In the later parts of the book, Lader discusses the manner in which the early civil rights battles led to the growth of a new and more "revolutionary" black movement. He is sympathetic to the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee radicals who rejected the Atlantic City Democratic compromise in 1964 and who insisted on the full seating for the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party. The Atlantic City fight led to a rupture between the young militants and the labor-liberal coalition which sought a compromise that would satisfy Lyndon Johnson. The event, Lader notes, was "a crucible of disillusion" for the radicals.

Were these radicals right to abandon coalition politics and move toward becoming "committed revolutionaries"? Lader sympathizes with their dilemma, but he has the courage to say that they made the wrong choice when they moved toward a new black nationalism and separatism. The 1965 Voting Rights Act, he notes, gradually took effect. What emerged in the South was not a black nationalist alternative "but an increasing coalition of black and white moderates in the Democratic Party." Even Fannie Lou Hamer and the M.F.D.P., he stresses, rejected S.N.C.C.'s new nationalist course, and sought white allies within the Democratic Party. M.F.D.P. "was still radical," Lader writes, "but [it] recognized the value of coalition politics." And he adds that the chosen tactics of these Mississippi blacks were "obviously more in line with American reality" than S.N.C.C.'s tactics of confrontation.

Lader is equally critical when he covers the stormy history of the New Left. Students for a Democratic Society, he writes, "cut itself off from the past and never profited from the successes and failures of the Old Left"; like S.N.C.C., it too was "unable to come to grips with socialism," seeking instead a substitute proletariat and a surrogate socialism. Whether the New Left liked it or not, it was the 1968 McCarthy campaign which brought protest back to the center of politics and which "demonstrated the basic problem of radicalizing the labor-liberal coalition: most liberals preferred the stability of the system when it offered even a modest alternative."

S.D.S. subsequently moved toward violence and embraced a gross caricature of Marxism. The New Left had, of course, valiantly led the resistance to the war in Vietnam, thereby increasing consciousness of American imperialism's world role. But, he emphasizes, "the Left was still not strong enough to build any lasting political framework without a coalition with the peace forces, and particularly the left-liberal wing of the Democratic Party." Admittedly that coalition "would have pushed the Left toward reformism," but Lader sees this as a necessary "dilemma of American politics," and he argues that "radicalism must blend with reformism if it is going to survive."

The New Left eventually became what Lader terms a "terrorist splinter group divorced from reality"; the Black Panthers retreated into their own internal and often violent conflicts, while the remainder of the New Left "groped its way toward change, searching for systems of mass participation on a local level." Lader criticizes those who still cling to a Leninist model of a vanguard party for America, and he supports instead the formation of local coalitions that have "hidden socialist objectives." Ironically, he cites Tom Hayden's Campaign for Economic Democracy approvingly in this respect, although Hayden always stresses his opposition to socialism and his support of free enterprise.

But why can't a socialist movement be involved in coalition politics and at the same time be overtly socialist? Lader does not entertain this possibility. Instead, he calls for a period of overt "reformism," which he interprets not as a period of retreat but as "a period of consolidation and regrouping while prior gains were being fused into the mainstream." Had Lader described his desired structural reforms more accurately, they would probably be very like what Michael Harrington called for in a recent interview, programs which start "where people are but lead way beyond."

Realizing that the era of corporate liberalism is coming to an end, and that unions, for example, can no longer be

Coming up: Ted Solotaroff writes of Muriel Rukeyser; Robert Lekachman discusses domestic economic policy in a review of Michael Harrington's *Decade of Decision.*

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bought off by the promise of sharing in an ever-expanding corporate pie, Lader predicts, accurately I think, that the once conservative unions may even move to seek alliances with the left. Hence, he ends by offering some hope for a revitalized New Left in America. His own book, which traces the attempts to create such a left since 1946, could play an important part in educating those now seeking to rebuild a socialist and social movement—those who seek "to fuse democratic values and a socialist vision of society into a uniquely American unity." □

The Happy Few

MATEO PARDO

AVALOVARA. *By Osman Lins. Translated by Gregory Rabassa. Alfred A. Knopf. 343 pp. $12.95.*

Osman Lins's *Avalovara*, originally published in 1973, is at once an outstanding and a characteristic achievement of recent Brazilian literature. It rivals Lezama Lima's *Paradiso* in capricious difficulty and Cortazar's *Hopscotch* in its gimmickry, but behind all of its intricate mystification there is a simple and powerful tale.

The novel's central story concerns the love of one man, Abel, for two women and an androgyne. There are also several substories which take us into ancient Rome and twentieth-century Germany, and they too reinforce the central quest archetype of the main plot. The simplicity of these stories is a foil for the complexity of the novel's numerological composition, and in this sense, *Avalovara* is meant to resemble *La Chanson de Roland* or Béroul's *Tristan*.

But all the complexities of numerology, symbolic letters and the like which buttress the plot have a straightforward purpose. Lins is interested in the dehumanizing impact of political and cultural oppression on the inner lives of sensitive people. It is the struggle of these "happy few" to maintain their ideals in the face of totalitarian oppression that gives the novel its dramatic tension. And the oppressors are clearly identified: they are the Brazilian military dictators and those who serve them; they are the mores of Brazilian and European society. The only things that these forces cannot destroy are the evocative power of language, the joys of sex and love and the final refuge of death.

It must be admitted, however, that for the uninitiated reader, *Avalovara* has more than its share of difficulties. Like his fellow Latin American novelists, Lins seems to write principally for the happy few, the cultural elite. Only Garcia Marquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude* has reached anything approaching a large public. The reason for this is not that these writers have turned their backs on the realities of their continent. It is simply that they do not believe, like the social realists and regionalists who came before them, that it is possible, in societies racked by poverty and illiteracy, to find a broad, popular readership. And it is this sense of estrangement that both frees a writer like Osman Lins from the constraints of the nineteenth-century narrative tradition and infuses his work with a peculiar brand of joyful desperation. □

Mateo Pardo teaches comparative literature at the University of Texas at Dallas.

Unlucky Sun

KIRKPATRICK SALE

THE SUN BETRAYED. *By Ray Reece. South End Press. 234 pp. $5.50.*

It takes a strong stomach and hard heart to read this book, because it tells a very sad tale, one that we simply do not want to know about: how the major corporations, in disgraceful alliance with Federal agencies, are working very effectively to control and squelch the possibilities of the one last hope for economic sanity in this nation, solar energy.

Some of this is incredible, some angering, some depressing, but it is most forceful here because it is so carefully and interestingly documented that the skulduggery is not at all in doubt. Oddly enough, the book shocks and surprises by its detail, even as it confirms and reinforces by its scope—we all knew that the energy companies were trying to undermine solar energy, but I don't think even the most cynical among us could have imagined the cruel and blatant ways in which they are going about it or how devastating the consequences.

Ray Reece is a Texas-based writer who is as skillful a storyteller as he is a researcher. I don't recommend him as an easy read, but *The Sun Betrayed* is absolutely necessary for anyone who has ever believed that it is possible to have a serious solution to the energy problem without the elimination of corporate giantism. □

Kirkpatrick Sale is the author of SDS, Power Shift: The Rise of the Southern Rim and its Challenge to the Eastern Establishment, *and of* Human Scale, *to be published in the spring (all by Random House).*

FILMS

ROBERT HATCH

"Commercial entertainment" is a term of reproach applied to films thought beneath the notice of those who visit museums, attend concerts and in general manage to read without moving their lips. However, the phrase is really too encompassing to offer much guidance—*The Taming of the Shrew*, after all, was as commercial as it was entertaining, and it is no disgrace to be the one if you also make sure to be the other. But there, of course, is the rub. I illustrate with two pictures that fall into the category.

The problem bedeviling Mr. and Mrs. Thomson (George Segal and Natalie Wood), the title pair of *The Last Married Couple in America*, is that all their friends are getting divorced and urging them to do likewise, as though divorce were some new sort of diet. The Thomsons are dutiful members of conspicuously consuming suburbia (they play touch football, they jog, their house looks like a shoe boutique and they eat either at junk-food drive-ins or in oaken Tudor restaurants of the sort where waiters brandish three-foot pepper grinders). That being so, they are understandably perplexed and disturbed by the stability of their own union and, what with the pressure of their friends and the inability of Mr. Thomson to resist a spectacularly resistible homewrecker (Valerie Harper), they do for a time each go his and her own way. In the end, having made the predictable discovery that they prefer each other to the juvenile partners they have lately acquired, the Thomsons bring their problem to a happy solution.

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Now that is not a profound or highly original plot but it is as useful as the one Shakespeare used—commercially sure-fire and potentially entertaining. Plots, in any case, are not that important; the characters are what count. And *The Last Married Couple* is as awful as it is because the characters are soft. One and all, they seem to model themselves on the personnel of prime-time situation comedies (Mr. Thomson treats himself to a one-night fling and gets the clap; see next week for Mrs. Thomson's reaction). Their rages are induced, their affections are routine, their humor is flaccid, they divert themselves by romping, and such appetites as they have are satisfied more by the size of the portion than the excellence of the dish. I suspect that the creators of this sodden film (John Herman Shaner wrote the screenplay; Gilbert Cates directed) expect it to succeed because a sufficient sector of the public will recognize themselves and their friends in its inanities. That is an enervating notion.

No one is apt to find himself or herself reflected in *Just Tell Me What You Want*—it is pure extravagance. Again the plot (from a novel by Jay Presson Allen) is not much, but the characters, though I would make no large claim for their profundity or even their consistency, do have size and bounce. Anyone with a taste for the battle of the sexes will be invigorated by the sight of Ali MacGraw half wrecking the ground floor of Bergdorf Goodman in an attempt to lay her handbag on Alan King, then chasing him around the corner and felling him in front of the Paris Theater, winning, thus, the applause of a group of ladies under umbrellas who do not understand, as the film's viewers are beginning to suspect, that these two are mated for keeps.

King plays Max Herschel, a tycoon; MacGraw is his much younger mistress and, thanks to that alliance and an alleged talent of her own, an apprentice tycoon in the business of television. They are hard as nails, cold as glass, mean as adders and—since this is commercial entertainment and not an exercise in misanthropy—capable of breaking each other's hearts. The film is a web of clichés: the faithful, no-nonsense secretary (Myrna Loy), the lovable old Jewish trickster (Keenan Wynn), the neurotic wife who escapes her husband through alcohol (Dina Merrill), the splendid young lover who can't stand the heat (Peter Weller)—but all raised to a pitch of improbability as far out as *Star Trek*. I admit to a weakness for films in which people hop into helicopters as casually as I get aboard the A train, and there seems to me something intrinsically funny about the screen's assumption that the richer you are, the bigger your bed; the ones in this film look the size of squash courts.

Just Tell Me What You Want wouldn't survive three sentences of serious comment, but then it doesn't aspire to serious comment. It is a commercial product (you should see the line that forms on a cold Monday afternoon) and it entertained me. The director is Sidney Lumet, who has a feel for slapstick among the affluent.

I was misled by *Mademoiselle* which advised, as quoted in the ads, that a film called *Gizmo!* is "like watching Buster Keaton, Woody Allen and James Bond all rolled into one!" That assertion of bizarre bedfellowship should have warned me, but Janet Maslin of *The New York Times* was calling the picture "a celebration" (of what, the ads do not say), and I felt I should go.

As it turns out, *Gizmo!* is a mercifully short (seventy-five minutes), achingly repetitive and more than a little depressing compendium of newsreel clips in which unduly optimistic inventors demonstrate their brainchildren—which either do not work or provide services which no one could possibly want—to skeptical onlookers. A great many of these foibles are locomotive novelties and the scenes typically end with the inventor flat on his face several feet in front of his starting point. Rex Reed reports that audiences went "berserk with laughter" when shown the succession of mishaps, but no such dangerous riot of merriment occurred while I was in the theater. It doesn't require much sensitivity to the pain of others to realize that these back-shed designers and mechanics are suffering humiliation and the end of their dreams of fame and riches. The accumulation of such sorrows made me glum. (I omit comment on a few shots of men performing such feats as deflecting cannon balls with their stomachs, biting nails into pieces and drinking several gallons of water in one sustained gulp. Such bids for popularity merely made me squirm.)

Judging from the hats of the onlookers and the quality of the camera work, the bulk of these exhibits dates from before—some from far before—World War II. You might expect it: We know so much about the laws of aerodynamics today that not even the most innocent of innovators is tempted to fly by flapping enormous lath-and-canvas wings. Similarly, the characteristics of the internal-combustion engine are so well understood that only lunatics would now suppose that it could be usefully attached to roller skates or the seat of one's pants.

The crestfallen heroes (and the few heroines) of *Gizmo!* were not mad; they were imaginative folk somewhat lacking in discretion; Wright brothers *manqué*. It is easy enough, but not very perceptive, to show them as clowns. However, most of them are dead by now and thus beyond caring. □

ART

LAWRENCE ALLOWAY

The 1970s is generally conceded to have been the decade of pluralism in art, but the meaning of this term has been much misunderstood. Carter Ratcliff, for example, who wrote the first of the articles summarizing the decade in art, regarded the period as a kind of failed 1960s. He lamented the shortage of stars and movements. It is true that there were no movements as commanding as Pop Art or Hard Edge, but this does not mean that the art scene was diffuse and uninflected. The horizontal abundance of the last ten years is a continuation of the real condition of twentieth-century art —"a situation of multiplicity" (John Cage's phrase).

It is sometimes supposed that diversity leads to a reduction of intensity, as if stylistic variety expressed cultural uncertainty. Actually, diversity is a property of the field of art as a whole and intensity belongs to the experience we have of particular artists and works. Let me cite a few works of the past ten years to suggest that the fact of diversity has not blunted the intensity of esthetic contact. This list is more or less random, except for favoring large works. Outdoor sculptures include Robert Smithson's "The Spiral Jetty," an earthwork curling into the sullen waters of the Great Salt Lake; Robert Morris's "Grand Rapids Project," an immense X stamped on a hill; Mary Miss's "Perimeters/Pavilions/

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Decoys," at several points on the grounds of the Nassau County Museum of Fine Arts. Among assemblages, I remember Robert Rauschenberg's "Rodeo Palace," a glowing three-door collage. Paintings include Leon Golub's "Assassins," based on the war in Vietnam; Benny Andrews's "Bicentennial Series," a panorama of black humor, and Audrey Flack's "Vanitas," a revival of the use of still life as ethical commentary.

Sculpturally, there was a tendency toward open rather than solid forms. This is not new in sculpture theory but the persistent environmental spread is new in achieved works. The floor, the wall, the room, the park, the street serve as the base for works that are larger in scale though sometimes shorter in duration than solid sculpture. Such works range from Sol LeWitt's modular wall drawings to loose repetitive groups of forms, like Carl André's rocks at Hartford. The new scale is demonstrated by the Dada sociology of Christo's "Running Fence," Otto Piene's festival occasions of large inflatable sculpture and Walter de Maria's conspicuous consumption of a gallery for the long-term display of a single monster work, "The Broken Kilometer" at the DIA Art Foundation in New York City. In Los Angeles the act of installation can lead to art's being lost in a mirage of relationships, but the mirages retain the formal probity of the lost objects (Robert Irwin, Michael Asher).

Public modes of sculpture received considerable support. On a Federal level, there were the National Endowment for the Arts and the General Services Administration, then the state arts councils, and foundation or corporate patronage: all converged to fund bigger and more sophisticated works. In ironic resistance to this is the tendency toward miniaturization: Joel Schapiro's little bronze houses, like "Monopoly" real estate pieces, set in big spaces on the floor against the wall; or Ira Joel Haber's buildings and landscapes in boxes, with uprooted trees, or burned wood, like Joseph Cornell boxes that have been violated.

The distinguishing features of the 1970s are the renewal of realism and the emergence of women's art. Women contributed substantially to all the varied styles of the decade: environmental sculpture (Cecile Abish, Alice Adams, Alice Aycock), pattern painting (Cynthia Carlson, Mary Grigoriadis, Joyce Kozloff), paper works. Drawing as a technique has expanded to include not only the marks on paper but also the paper itself as a substance. Thus, drawing acquired a connection to craft and thence to sculpture. Michelle Stuart and Nancy Spero, in their different ways, have explored paper as a structural material. In addition to works that address feminism directly, there is an absolute increase in the number of women artists. The women's cooperative galleries, though few in number, have an importance beyond their size. They keep open the possibility of ideological reform and personal control of one's work. The co-ops are probably the most significant aspect of the alternative spaces that have proliferated in the 1970s to supplement the existing distribution system.

Realism was sufficiently established to be the subject of an exhibition, "22 Realists," at the Whitney Museum of American Art in the first year of the decade. Since then, galleries specializing in realism range from co-ops (Prince Street and First Street Galleries, and the Bowery Gallery now relocated with the Blue Mountain at 119-121 Wooster Street) to commercial galleries (Forum, Allan Frumkin, Robert Schoelkopf). Realism as a style includes Alex Katz's figures, which assimilate visual elements from abstract painting, and Philip Pearlstein's, which, the artist insists, are antithetical to abstract painting. Realism is not a restrictive term, as it was earlier in the century, but a capacious one. It designates not a prevailing style but a fundamental concern with the signifying function of art.

There were three old-time art movements in the 1970s, by which I mean groups that are stylistically homogeneous and based on galleries. Photorealism was of this sort, pushed first by the O.K. Harris Gallery and given by its owner Ivan Karp its mechanical and suburban iconography. None of the innovative painters, the ones who stretched the style, are in the gallery, however: Charles Close, Richard Estes and Audrey Flack are at other galleries and Malcolm Morley is unaffiliated.

Pattern painting is a branch of abstract art in which geometry is turned into decoration, the utopian forms of earlier abstract art transformed into architectural or craft images. The first group show was in 1976 at the Alessandra Gallery, now defunct, followed by the show at P.S. 1 in 1977 for which John Perreault coined the term. It is a loose grouping of artists who orbit around a core of craft metaphors. Thus we get culturally loaded motifs in place of platonic absolutes, discursive grids in the place of Oneness. "New Image Painting" is an awkwardly named but pushy movement. A more accurate label for it would be something like "Flat Figure Painting," but this would lack the evolutionary élan of "New Image." It is actually a conservative movement: It acknowledges the pressure of realism, but softens it according to ideas of color and flat design taken from abstract painting. Figures, one at a time or severally, frontal or in motion, equivocate between realist representation and abstract pattern. □

FIVE ELEPHANTS

are walking towards me.
When the morning is still a frozen
tear in the brain, they come
from the east, trunk to tail,
clumsy ballerinas.

How can I tell them all night
I refused consolation? Five umbrellas, five
willows, five bridges and their shadows!
They lift their trunks, hooking the sky
I would rush into, split pod

of quartz and lemon. I could say
they are five memories, but
that would be unfair.
Rather pebbles seeking refuge in the heart.
They move past me. I turn and follow,

and for hours we meet no one else.

Rita Dove

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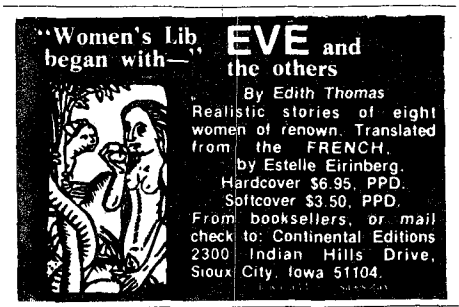
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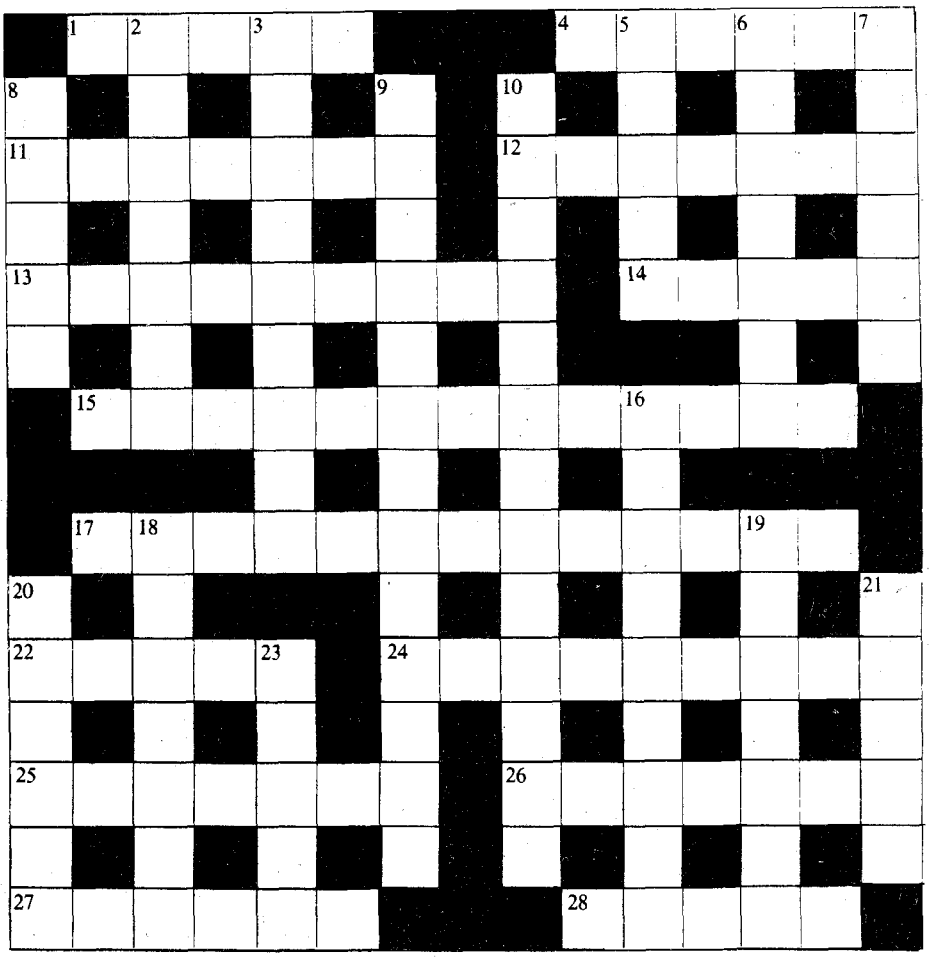
X-523

Crossword Puzzle No. 1810

FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1 and 20 down A god-like figure, slightly less than a hundred, however putting on weight. (If pushed, one may be more than a little worried.) (5,6)
4 Not returned after 24 hours in the city. (6)
11 Is ruin apt to be created by a Protestant? (7)
12 Certainly not a hidden weapon, though you might be a wreck if you do it yourself. (7)
13 Always fail to follow orders, and some say that's the matter! (5,4)
14 One could hold it either way. (5)
15 Descriptive of early Briton. (If you only inhale, you might get it!) (4,2,3,4)
17 Carson, until it changed teaching, in a sense. . . . (13)
22 . . . . and without it, Carson, up to such time as is made from 17. (5)
24 Keeps in condition, with stamina in the making of it. (9)
25 If the paint goes on too heavily, you might use it a little less thick. (7)
26 With the foreman a team-member, come out from inside it. (7)
27 What might shoot back to obtain a little gold. (6)
28 Even this has something in common with 14. (5)

DOWN

2 One might meet someone on this. (7)
3 Burial in a fixed session of school, with 10 in trouble. (9)
5 Is a spy a cultivated man, very commonly? (5)
6 With it, I can't make an ill-fated voyager out. (7)
7 and 18 Is it close to zero? That's not very much! (4,2,7)
8 Put the palm on the bottom, possibly. (5)
9 Periods of the year which seem to bring out Asian adders? (6,7)
10 What a cage might do for a specific animal, or a number of the band. (4,4,5)
16 Order to the bell-hop to call someone for a stage or screen production. (5,4)
18 See 7 down
19 Mix up an amount of money taken in around it. (7)
20 See 1 across
21 You and me and the lady and the leading man? (5)
23 Hang around relaxed, with nothing to lose, but push forward. (5)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 1809

ACROSS: 1 Bessemer; 5 Charms; 10 Gravest; 11 Nuclear; 12 Moore; 13 Rheostats; 14 and 16 Short circuits; 19 Scalpers; 22 Addle; 24 Believe me; 26 Doyen; 28 Extract; 29 Produce; 30 Tasked; 31 Teenager. DOWN: 1 Bigamist; 2 SEATO; 3 Elemental; 4 Enteric; 6 Hacks; 7 Reenacted; 8 Stress; 9 Endear; 15 Osculates; 17 Up and down; 18 Reindeer; 20 Events; 21 Steeple; 23 Object; 25 Erase; 27 Young.

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—Sure. Don't call yourself *National Geographic*—that's taken.

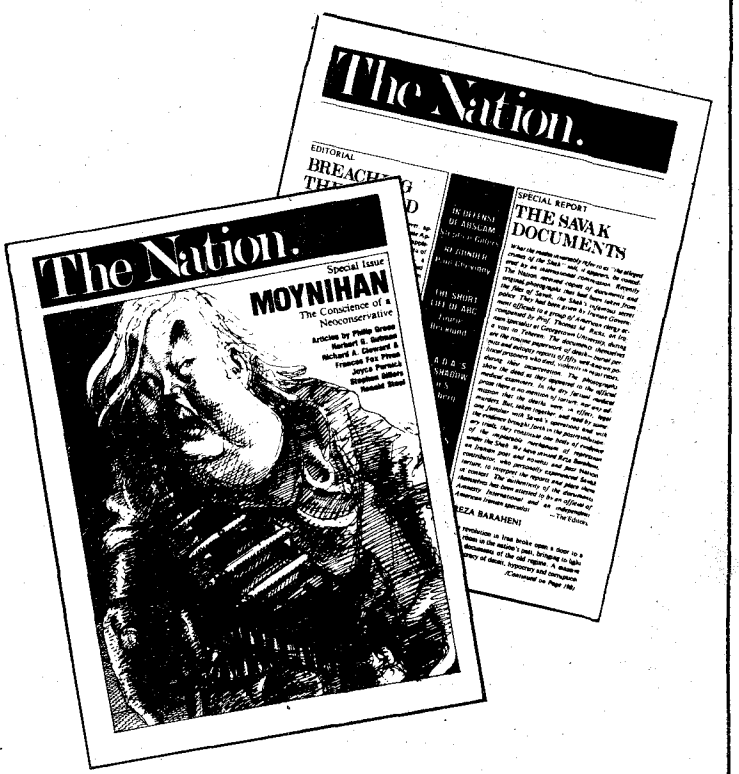
—I meant that in a philosophical sense. What should a magazine stand for, for example?
—Nothing. It should stand for nothing.

—Nothing?
—Sure. The way the world is today, nobody should stand for it. Home heating oil up 100 percent in one year, stagflation, MX missiles on race tracks, 13 percent interest rates and 14 percent inflation, John Connally—who can stand it?

—What do you think of the Presidential race?
—I'd rather not. But since you ask, the answers are yes, no and only his hairdresser knows for sure.

—What were the questions?
—Will Ted Kennedy stay in, will Jerry Brown drop out and is Ronald Reagan older than I am?

—You certainly have all the answers.
—Nope. I have all the questions. You want the answers, go see the Rev. Sun Myung Moon. But if you think for yourself, fill out that handy coupon on this page and subscribe to *The Nation*.



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